VOL. XVIII NO. 9

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

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Courage and Cheerfulness

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
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LET NOT THE FLAME DIE OUT

*By Edward Carpenter**

LET not the flame die out!

Hitherto with wayward feet, in ignorance as a child, with sweet illusions and shows like dancing fireflies, and hopes and disappointments, have you been led on;

Henceforth putting these aside, as coming of age and to your inheritance, deliberately looking before and after, you shall measure your undertaking and your powers.

For as a traveller beholds a snow mountain on the distant verge, beautiful with inexpressible longings through the hot summer air—so as belonging to another world shall you behold from afar the signal of the goal of your wanderings;

Rising, falling, lost in thickets, wildernesses, deserts, the untrodden summit shall yet gleam on you—its beauty shall never be forsaken of your love.

O let not the flame die out!
Cherished age after age in its dark caverns,
In its holy temples cherished,
Fed by pure ministers of love,
Let not the flame die out!

*From "Towards Democracy."

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RADIO TALKS

By Swami Paramananda

I.

COURAGE AND CHEERFULNESS

Good evening, friends of Radio Land! Tonight, as I stand here before the microphone, I am thinking what will bring to you that which we all need—a sense of refreshment, of new courage, hope, and faith.

A long time ago, a Chinese philosopher gave to his disciple this wise counsel: "There are the foot-paths along the hills; if suddenly they be used they become roads; and if, as suddenly, they are not used, the wild grass fills them up. Now the wild grass fills up your mind." This counsel, no matter how ancient it may be, still holds true for us today. The wild grass which fills the mind comes in the form of fear, discontent, discouragement, and morbid gloominess; therefore, how essential it is for us to keep ourselves in a state of rhythm, harmony, and cheerfulness, free from all elements which bar our vision.

"Make the counsel of thy heart to stand; there is none more faithful unto thee than it. For a man's soul is sometimes wont to bring him tidings, more than seven watchmen that sit on high in a watch-tower." Through our reading, you and I feel that we know a great deal of the philosophy, the psychology of mind, but reading does not help us as much as the practical application of the knowledge that we have acquired, and that practical application is very much like keeping a road or a foot-path in use. Do we not all know how true this is? Those of us who have gone on the mountain trails of California, for instance, have seen how the fire-brakes on the hills, when they are not kept cleared, become choked with wild growth. Same way it is

with us. It is not enough for us to have schooling or education, knowledge or business training; the essential thing is to quicken our mental faculties, and keep them quickened.

No one saves himself merely by trying to avoid labor, exertion, or expenditure of energy, but rather through the practice of moderation, co-operation, and the proper use of the mind. This is not always easy. There are moments when we cannot help feeling discouraged and despondent—our plans do not carry, the success which we desire does not come. Therefore, in order to acquire these qualities, we must have courage—steadfast courage—also cheerfulness of heart.

As I have said, theories from written books and Bibles do not suffice; we need a certain amount of practical philosophy to apply in our daily life and living; and that is what the Chinese philosopher meant when he gave to his disciple the picture of a foot-path as a symbol of the mind. No matter how steep a trail may seem, we can overcome all its difficulties if we keep it open, free, and in proper use. We must not let the mind remain stagnant; we must not let it sink in despair; we must not impose upon ourselves thoughts which lead to self-depreciation, and we must never allow any element of fear to enter in. I want to lay as much emphasis as possible on the overcoming of fear through courage, and on cheerfulness. A cheerful heart is a very wonderful asset, not only for the individual but for all about him. In the family, in one's own household, and among one's friends, one always welcomes that person who is not moody, changeable, and constantly dissatisfied, but who has learned the art of remaining steadfast and courageous.

Ralph Waldo Emerson tells us, "O friend, never strike sail to a fear. Come into port greatly, or sail with God the seas. Not in vain you live, for every passing eye is cheered

and refined by the vision." This is rather a graphic description. "Never strike sail to a fear!" It reminds me of a story. In India, a gentleman who enjoyed seclusion was walking one day through the forest. He was musing within himself when, suddenly, behind him he heard a noise as if something had fallen from a tree. He was so startled that he turned to look, and there, right back of him, was a huge monkey. The man was frightened; he thought the monkey had some evil intent, so he began to run. The monkey, who had merely dropped from a branch and had no desire to molest any one, immediately started to run after him, partly out of curiosity, partly out of amazement that a human being should run away from him. Other monkeys in the trees, seeing a man being chased by one of their kind, joined the pursuit. The faster the man ran, the faster they followed. There seemed no escape for him, until some one who happened to be passing shouted, "Foolish man, why are you running away? Turn and face the brutes!" The man obeyed, and no sooner did he do so than the monkeys all fled. His courage worked magic. Courage always performs miracles for us, especially spiritual courage. And what is the real source of courage? Not the strength we may have in our muscle, not our ingenuity, no matter how shrewd and calculating we may be, but our living faith in the invincible quality of the soul—the God-part within us. Such faith helps us in our hour of ailment; it helps us in our hour of distress; and it enables us to stand up against all the difficulties and dangers of life. Moreover, through it we set a definite standard for others who are struggling, who are faint-hearted, discouraged and full of doubt.

Invariably, in every circumstance, we can prove the truth of the parable, that no sooner do we turn and face our difficulties than they are gone—they vanish. But this we can-

not do through mere calculation. Framed upon the desk we may have various texts stating that we have overcome fear, that we are courageous, that we are cheerful; yet, in spite of all our affirmations, we find that in moments of stress we forget. That is why we need a fundamental reminder of the basic facts of our existence, and for this there is nothing so precise and so accurate as the habit of prayer and meditation. You may say, "Oh, you are trying to give us old-fashioned religion!" There is nothing old-fashioned or new-fashioned in it. We need to remind ourselves with vital power of our true being, that is all. It is not the consciousness of the body that sustains the body; it is not the consciousness of our intellectual shrewdness that helps us to go over our difficulties; rather it is to remember persistently and steadily that we are part of the Infinite. That remembrance, that contemplation, that unwavering consciousness, when it is a companion to us, aids us in surmounting all of life's obstacles. Not only that, others—our fellow pilgrims—by looking at us also learn not to be daunted by anything, not to be discouraged or fearful, but to maintain a cheerful bearing in all circumstances, even though the outside world may not understand their viewpoint.

"Give us to awake with smiles, give us to labor smiling. As the sun lightens the world, so let our loving-kindness make bright this house of our habitation." Here is the whole gist of all we are considering this evening. It is not a question of pretending, or of trying forcibly to adopt certain ethical rules in regard to spiritual philosophy, courage, and cheerfulness; it is a question of practical application. "As the sun lightens the world, so let our loving kindness make bright this house of our habitation." The man who practises kindliness, lovingness, truth, that is the man who can be courageous. A selfish man can never be brave. He

is always fearful. Yo do not have to take my word for it; you can verify it for yourself. One who is arrogant and boisterous—the aggressive type—he may try to frighten you, he may bluster and make believe, but he himself is easily frightened, because he has not the moral stamina to fortify him. In order to have that kind of courage, and the cheerfulness of heart that is perpetual, we need practical application in our daily life—kindliness, lovingness, patience, tranquillity, and steadfastness of purpose under all conditions.

I know that many of you, when you study or reflect or try to enter into these deeper problems of life, at once become aware of your imperfectoins. But "Let us never be discouraged by our weaknesses. The sun has many spots. On that account does it cease to give light? So let us shine with the light which He, the true Light, gives us. He will remove our defects and make us perfect. Our duty is to shine. The fire-fly is one of the smallest of insects; yet it gladdens the heart of the traveler with its tiny light." Let us think of this wonderful simile. The sun has spots, but that does not hinder its giving us light; it does not cause any blemish; and the fire-flies, even though they are but tiny insects, bring a certain amount of gladness. If we can only remember that no matter how insignificant we may seem to ourselves or to others, every one of us has something definite to give, definite to receive, and a definite part to play in this great world of life, then we shall never sink down in discouragement.

Not by thinking of ourselves as Mr. So-and-So or Mrs. So-and-So, or by trying to assert ourselves with self-importance can we ever take our true place in this cosmic universe, but only as we understand our position in relation to Infinitude. For no matter how great we may

think we are, as we begin to analyse we shall find there are people who are greater, and above them, those who are greater still. To know this is good, because it brings us humility. And there is no end! When we look up into the immensity of sky with its stars and planets, awakening within us vision and a sense of the Infinite, as we relate ourselves with that Infinite, we become aware of a larger, a vaster, an unending life—wherein lies the whole strength of man. That consciousness fills our being with freshness—bringing us new courage and endurance which no amount of physical training can give, and a sense of gladness which no turmoil of worldly life can disturb.

This may sound too idealistic, too philosophic. You may say, "In this world of noise, in this world of drudgery, how can we expect to find a place or a state of mind which is never disturbed by the turbulence of the world?" The thing is we must not always be looking without for the remedy of our ills; we must form the habit of looking inward; for as we look within we shall find that which is of lasting quality, and we shall lack for nothing. It is not a mechanical thing, this awakening of spiritual consciousness; it is the spontaneous unfoldment of our soul. When we realize that we are part of Infinitude, shall we then sit in a corner and weep? Never! Shall we then go out and try to rob someone or make another unhappy? These things will be entirely beneath our concept of human action. The result will be that we shall begin to have a more contented attitude of mind and heart, and we shall radiate such a feeling of cheerfulness, of happiness—we may call it the happiness of Heaven, a radiant quality that comes from the depths of our being and shines upon our faces—that those who contact us shall feel that there is such a thing as inner bliss. Where there is sadness we shall bring joyousness; where

there is distress we shall bring light; where there is weakness we shall bring strength, even though we may not preach or philosophize. The strength of the practical life is far greater than all the philosophical or ethical systems that have ever been written down by the hand of man.

There come times, I know, when the way seems long, when we feel that we cannot endure any more; but there is a brave spirit within us keeping watch, and as we fix our gaze on that, the hour of darkness will end and we shall find rest, peace, and gladness of heart. Good-night.

II.

HABIT OF INWARD GAZING

Good evening to all radio friends of my unseen audience! What a wonderful thing it is that we are able to talk to people who are far away from us, with the surety that they can hear us! And what a wonderful thing it would be if we could speak to them with that unmistakable voice—the voice that reaches—the voice of love, the voice of truth!

"Look thou within; within thee is the fountain of good, and it will ever spring if thou wilt ever delve." This looking within is not our daily habit. In fact it is something that we seldom do, seldom think of doing. If we are hurt, if we are thwarted, if we are confronted with difficulties or puzzled by circumstances, it never occurs to us to look within for the solution, or to find our inspiration; rather we look without. Yet, unless we are altogether deaf to the voice of truth, this idea of inward gazing must come to us with a certain conviction, a dynamic force, causing us to think more deeply and profoundly.

"The lock of error shuts the gate, open it with the key of love." The great Indian mystic Kabir tells us this. We must find the key of love so that the lock of error can no longer shut the gate through which we reach the fountain-

head of all inspiration. What is the lock of error? Hate, anger, aggressiveness, impatience, hasty judgment, doubt, and despondency. These bar the avenue for our self-expression; and so long as we remain out-going in our habit, in our thought, in our great struggle for gain, they will continue to bar it. The vulgar man, the greedy man, the selfish man must be humanized; he must assume new form. This, however, cannot be done through calculation, through the ordinary measures; nor can it be achieved by the man who is hasty and uncouth, who lacks balance, moderation, and all those qualities which make for true manhood. As the philosophers, great teachers, and thinkers of mankind have always said and felt in their hearts, if man's surface being is to be transformed, the out-going process must be checked; he must learn to turn his gaze inward.

The average person will say, "What can I do if I am naturally impatient?" or, "It is in my nature to be doubting and despondent." If he feels this, it is because he has not looked within. What people may say of him, what they may observe with their outer eyes, this is of the greatest importance to him, therefore he remains always bound to the surface experience, and becomes a thoroughly out-going man. Out-going men we have in great abundance today. In fact most of us are out-going. Our training, our occupation, our habits of body and mind make us more and more dependent on external things, less and less content within our own soul, and less and less resourceful. The average person when he is left alone feels helpless and lonely. On the other hand, the man of resource desires to be alone so that he can commune undisturbed with his own thoughts, not thoughts that are petty and small, superficial and selfish, but thoughts that are profound, deep, constructive, and inspiring, leading to untold wealth of inspiration and action.

Let us go within, look within, gaze within that we may find the things which are hidden in our soul. This is not merely a speculative philosophy, tending to make us visionary and vague, it is something that is of definite value to us, something profound and practical, enriching our daily life, as well as those who may come in contact with our life.

The out-going man, the man who finds fault with circumstances and with his destiny, who is constantly pointing out to others their defects and shortcomings, and who is discontented because he sees only the evil in the world, that same man when he begins to turn inward changes his tone, because "Within every man's thought is a higher thought; within the character he exhibits today, a higher character." One, however, who is lonely, poor, ignorant, who is struggling and faltering, may find it hard to believe this; it will be very difficult for us to convince such a one that within him is a nobler character, a greater Self that is capable of thinking higher thoughts than he is thinking now.

Why should it be difficult for us to convince anyone of this? Because we have convinced ourselves. The greatest lesson that we can give to our fellow men is not contained in any Bible or book of philosophy; it is conveyed by what we are, by the character we are exhibiting even unconsciously through our daily conduct by our thought, word, and act. Christ said, "Let your light shine!" If we have found our access into that inner life, if our light shines through, then no one is going to mistake us; and that light is going to shine through if our motive is pure, our feeling constructive, and our instinct noble—it will be reflected from one end of the world to the other, giving impetus to many hearts. A noble man, no matter where he lives, his radiance, his life, his utterance reach all quarters and are of undying value. This living quality is what we need today

in our modern life. Our scientific advancement on the path of progress will not be safe or sound until our human nature is spiritualized. But first, the lower instinct, the brute instinct—hatred, anger, jealousy, and all such tendencies—must be humanized. Education will do that. Education shows us what a good character should be. It is for us, however, to bring into practical fruition what we have learned through our studies, and that cannot be done without the aid of spiritual resourcefulness. Man is very incomplete if he looks only without, if he depends only on his muscles, on his intellectual faculties or his mental shrewdness; he must learn to look within, and place his trust within. Therefore, what a wise, consoling, dynamic thought is that of Marcus Aurelius, "Look thou within; within thee is the fountain of good, and it will ever spring if thou wilt ever delve." People who have drunk from that fountain, their words never grow stale, their utterance is always vital and full of interest, their thoughts are ever fresh and fragrant.

You may recognize the value and significance in what I am saying, but if you turn it aside it will do you very little good. The thing is, how to realize it. When we have found our access into this realm that is unbounded and limitless—and every one has access to it—we become at once partakers of Divinity. Then, if we give expression to something in the name of humanity, it has meaning; otherwise we are like parrots—we say one thing while our life is running in another direction. It is this turning inward, this gaining our entrance into that hidden, uninvestigated, and unexplored region that opens before us altogether a new vista before which our imperfection melts away just as the ice melts before the sun, because it cannot stand the perfect light and radiance. Our coldness, our doubt, our despondency, and all that keeps us earth-bound, ignorant, and im-

perfect, they vanish when we are fed and nurtured through the direct source and supply of Infinitude. Let us never overlook this.

I am not a great believer in dogmatism, as you know. In every turn I have given, not through calculation but through spontaneity of feeling, the thought that it is useless for us to lay emphasis on dogmatism, whether it comes from east or west, north or south. Rather we should emphasize life itself, because character is unmistakable. "Within every man's thought is a higher thought; within the character he exhibits today, a higher character." When that nobler instinct unfolds spontaneously, then we learn to speak a language which is understandable—the universal language—then all the gates of our soul which before were locked, causing us to be narrow, bound, and full of doubt and despondency, are thrown open, because we have found the key of love—the only key that can unlock them.

Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans, Jews—all the peoples of the earth—as they learn to use that key, will give a death blow to the discord, the war, the intolerance, the hatred which make men forget their unity, and the divine Source of their existence; they will realize brotherhood, not as a theory, not just as a beautiful concept, but as a living fact in human existence.

The most manifest sign of wisdom is continued cheerfulness. —*Montaigne*

Be desirous to converse in purity with your own pure mind and with God. —*Epictetus*

Every man has in himself a continent of undiscovered character. Happy is he who acts the Columbus to his own soul. —*Sir J. Stevens*

REGENERATION

*By Helen Keller**

Human beings pass through two distinct experiences—the birth into existence and the birth into life.

When we are born of the flesh, we are utterly helpless and dependent, while in the spiritual birth we are active, and in a sense creators. We have nothing to do with our birth into existences; for we must exist before we can make anything of ourselves. On the other hand, our birth into life is a matter of choice, we have a very direct share in it; for no real spiritual life can be thrust upon us against our will.

This is the meaning of the Lord's constant, loving invitation through His Word to all of us, to come unto Him and choose life, and be ever on our guard against the evils which would rob us of the chosen life. Only by exercising our powers of thought and keeping our hearts always warm and pure do we become truly alive. But this beautiful work of re-creation cometh not by observation, it is wrought in the quiet depths of the soul. For, as the Lord says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but thou canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the spirit."

Therefore we should not think of conversion as the acceptance of a particular creed, but as a change of heart. It is the soul turning away from the ignoble instincts which tempt us to feel, think, speak, and act for mere self-interest and the good opinion of the world, and finding joy in the unselfish love of God and a life of usefulness to others above all things. Our choice of life is this delight—this sweet expansion of mind and heart without which no worth-while achievement is possible.

*From "My Religion."

But we are not born again all of a sudden as some people seem to think. It is a change which comes over us as we hope and aspire and persevere in the way of the Divine Commandments. For a long time we resolve like angels, but drop back into the old, matter-of-fact way of life, and do just what we did before, like mortals. We are already on the road to success, however, when we see that because we have always done something, and because everybody does it, and because our grandfathers did it, are not good reasons why we should do it. There is no plane of experience where, if we want to, we can not enlarge our lives by caring about people outside ourselves, and seeking highest, most helpful ideas of Him who is the "Way, the Truth, and the Life." When once we make up our minds to do this, and set out fearlessly, all outward circumstances and limitations give way before us. We take up our cross daily with a stronger heart and a fairer prospect of life and happiness. . . .

A very real regeneration comes with the change which begins in a man when he becomes conscious of his spiritual faculties. Such a change takes place not only after periods of bereavement and sorrow, but often after experiences of which he alone may be aware. There comes a day when his eyes are cleared, and he sees himself, his present environment, and the future in their true relations. The scales of selfishness fall away, and he looks at his own life soberly.

It is amazing how prodigiously men have written and talked about regeneration, and yet how little they have said to the purpose. Self-culture has been loudly and boastfully proclaimed as sufficient for all our ideals of perfection. But if we listen to the best men and women everywhere, they will answer with a decided negative. Some of them have amassed vast treasures of knowledge, and they will say that

science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all—the apathy of human beings. It is pointed out, and Swedenborg says the same thing, that man, unschooled in love and pity, is worse than a beast. He is a hornless, tailless animal; he does not eat grass; but he wantonly destroys with his reckless power of thought. He invents more and more horrible weapons to kill and mar his brother man in war; he mutilates helpless animals for the changing sport of fashion; and he has a passion for fault-finding and scandal which rises beyond his control. Many other evils are no doubt traceable to his ignorance, but certainly not these pernicious tendencies. His deliverance is not going to be through self-culture unaided by right desires.

There is another large group of well-meaning people who hold that man can be reformed largely by a change of environment; and there is enough truth in this to render it plausible and attractive. But it is over-emphasized and often wrongly applied. It is not environment that alters a human being, but forces within him. The blind, the deaf, the prisoner for conscience's sake, even the poorest men with sound ideals, have all proved that they can shape life nearer to their desires, no matter what the outward circumstance.

Because there is a good deal of the child in us, we grow impatient easily and say to ourselves, "O, if we could stand in the lot of our more fortunate neighbors, we could live better, happier, and more useful lives." How often we hear a young man say, "If I had the opportunity of my boss's son, I could achieve great success." "If I didn't have to associate with such vulgar folk, I could become morally strong," says another, and a third laments, "If I only had the money of my wealthy friend, I should gladly do my part in the uplift of the world."

Now I am as much up in arms against needless poverty and degrading influences as anyone else, but, at the same time, I believe human experience teaches that if we cannot succeed in our present position, we could not succeed in any other. Unless, like the lily, we can rise pure and strong above sordid surroundings, we would probably be moral weaklings in any situation. Unless we can help the world where we are, we could not help it if we were somewhere else. The most important question is not the sort of environment we have, but the kind of thoughts we think every day, the kind of ideals we are following, in a word, the kind of men and women we really are. The Arab proverb is admirably true: "That is thy world wherein thou findest thyself." . . . .

Co-operation with the Lord and confidence in His unwearying help, learning to understand more truths in the Word and living according to them and doing good for its sake—these are the only wholesome ways for mortals to rise out of their old selves and rebuild their world. They are greatly to be pitied if they wish to steal the merits of Christ or demand heaven as a "reward." It is much nobler for them to look into their own hearts and drive out the dragon of selfishness; this repentance they can accomplish quickly, but they must grow slowly and as cheerfully as possible, or they will never acquire any abiding strength of character. In fact, they will never stop regenerating in this life or the next, since they will forever find more to love, more to know, more to achieve.

A godly life is the steadfast working out of inward freeness from self; to become thus God-like is the bringing back of man's first nature. —*Theologia Germanica*

THE HERMIT OF THE DUNES

By Sister Devamata

World-bruised and world-weary I turned from the world
And sought the desert's solitude.
Nature had gone before me and laid
A carpet of wild primroses;
She had spread soft sand for my bare feet to tread on
And hidden close beneath its surface
Clear cool water to cleanse and refresh me.
Sea, too, gave me her dole of alms—
Piles of driftwood on the tide-washed beach.
With this I built me a modest cabin
Between two sand bluffs on the dunes,
A cloudless deep blue sky above it,
A soft sea-breeze blowing thru it,
Cooling my sunburned face.

Here the Infinite and I dwell together.
I had not thought to find a companion,
But the Great Spirit comes first
To those who are alone—
The deeper the silence the richer
The revelations It vouchsafes.
Sometimes the stillness of my hermitage is broken—
A hungry one comes to my door;
A stranger on the dunes passes by
Seeking willing hands to aid him;
Or a distant neighbor falls ill and needs my care.
Is food lacking in my frugal larder?
A day's gentle labor on some far-away ranch
Earns grain from the field.

Or nuts from the walnut grove
Or fruit from the orchard.

In hewing and helping and communing
With the Silence my days go by;
And when my simple tasks are done
There are long hours under the stars,
Listening to the low murmur of shifting sands
And to the voice of the Great Spirit.
Thus in peaceful happy comradeship
The Infinite and I dwell together,
While weeks, months and years pass as uncounted links
In an endless chain of eternity.

MY FRIEND THE WISE MAN

By Helen Spratley

Nature has given the world beauty with a lavish hand, and nowhere more generously than in the region of the sand dunes on the California coast. Here, for centuries, mighty winds have tirelessly laid grain upon grain of sand until veritable mountains now billow back from the sea. As these mountains of sand grew, so did the valleys and coves, and in these there came to be patches of vegetation. Oases of green against a vast background of grey, rose-tan, and gold. Sand, sand as far as the eye can see, constantly changing its color to suit the mood of sun and moon. Sometimes the sand is as smooth as glass, at other times marked by delicate ripples like water patterned by the capricious wind. Here truly ones sees Nature in her role of sculptress, daily molding new wonders for man's enjoyment. It was in this setting that I met my friend, the Hermit. To this great workshop he had come many years past, to find there his manhood,

and be fashioned anew in the image of his maker. But let him tell his story.

"I was born in Quebec, but my earliest memories are of a little town in Massachusetts. My father was French, of a family that had migrated to Canada at the time of the French Revolution. On my mother's side there was an Indian strain which she traced back to the Iroquois King, Philip. I was the next to eldest of a large family, and never a very satisfactory child from my parents' point of view. To begin with I was undersized and spindly. To counteract this, my father made me eat much meat, often raw pork, which was loathsome and used to make me violently ill. To help me overcome this nausea I was told that the pork tasted like nuts, which were my favorite food. Owing to this improper feeding I was constantly afflicted by skin diseases.

"At the age of seven I took my first drink! Father used to treat his friends who visited the house, and one day left a flask lying on the table. Wishing to appear very manly before my playmates, I offered them each a sip, and then finished the contents of the bottle. The result was disasterous, and I lay many days in bed, bewildered and sick.

"Ours was a Catholic family, and I became an altar-boy. The Church had an irresistible charm for me, and I used to spend many hours loitering in its precincts. Sometimes I would completely lose consciousness of my surroundings and the passage of time, retaining only a sense of joy. My fervor, for I suppose it could be called that, grew so intense that during service I would lose track of everything, and attain a state of ecstasy from which I had to be roused to carry on my religious duties. Naturally this behavior made me an unsatisfactory assistant at the services, and I was dismissed with a criticism for my laziness.

"When I was fourteen my father apprenticed me to a tailor in a distant city. The work was confining, and little suited to my health or temperament. As I approached maturity my day-dreams gradually ceased, and I came to regard them in the light of others' opinion. In fact, I was ashamed of having shown such weakness.

"My leisure hours were spent with youngsters like myself, and our meeting places were the dance halls and saloons. Through gradual stages my system, despite its early resistance, had accustomed itself to alcohol, and I drank heavily. After awhile I became too ill to be of much use to my employer, and he sent me back to my parents. Then followed some months of illness and idleness, during which time I consistently sought to drown my discomfort in a bottle. I went to work in the cotton mills about which the town centered, and for several years I remained working at this industry.

"As I grew older all traces of my early religious enthusiasm were obliterated, and I lived entirely for the flesh. Eat, drink, and be merry if possible was my philosophy of life. My thought and action were as coarse as the food on which I lived. Meat no longer sickened me—indeed it formed the main part of my diet.

"The financial panic of 1905 found me working in the Edison plant making phonographs. Like thousands of others my employment ceased. Shortly thereafter I became seriously ill and when I was able to be about again I found myself down and out, and suffering from a supposedly incurable disease. I hit the road with a few coins in my pocket, and my blanket over my shoulder. It took me five months to beat my way to the California coast. Mixing as I did with the flotsam and jetsam of humanity in the jungles of civilization, there were few vices I did not witness or embrace. For awhile I prospected in Placer county, alternating periods

of work with days and nights of reveling whenever my purse permitted. Finally ill health again intervened, and I drifted down the coast to Pismo beach.

"The only employment I could find was that of bartender, and it suited me well enough. I was unable to eat much, and supplemented my food with liquor. I used to drink a quart of whiskey each morning before eating, and usually went to bed in a state bordering on insensibility. One night as I stumbled from the barroom into the kitchen I fell, and in clutching the table to get to my feet again my hand encountered a knife. Into my confused consciousness there flashed the thought that herein lay my deliverance. The pounding of my heart increased as, beside myself, I raised the knife. But the muscles refused to answer my command, and from somewhere came a voice which stilled all other sound—'Thou shalt not kill! Believe in Me and you shall be born again. The Father that is within me is within you also. Believe in Him and all things will be added unto you.'

"The suffering of that hour of blackest despair and degradation was in reality the travail of my spiritual re-birth! I do not remember how I reached my cot nor how long I lay there, but my awakening was to a new world. A fervor like that of my childhood filled me. My one thought was to get away from the sordidness of my life and surroundings, that that which had come into being within me might not perish. Debauched as my body was, it too responded to the stirring of new life, and so again I rolled my blankets, gathered together a pan or so, an axe, some matches, and my Bible, and struck out down the beach. For some months I made no permanent camp, sleeping where inclination and circumstances placed me. There were plenty of luscious clams to be had for the digging. Sometimes I sold a few to nearby

farmers or exchanged them for fruits and vegetables.

"The thought of the morrow never entered my consciousness. In my heart was only one impulse: to flood my being with the light that, having touched it for an instant, had wrought the miracle of life. I used to lie for hours pillowed in the sparkling sand, and while Mother Earth and the beneficent sun worked to purify and restore my wasted flesh, the Spirit within gained calmness, and, like some plant long denied water, began to put forth delicate tendrils of growth. It was not all easy going by any means. Came nights when the very silence mocked, and old habits and desires peopled my solitude with a thousand devils, though each torment endured left me armed with new strength. How can I describe to you the joy which filled me as the realization grew of my true identity. 'I and my Father are One.'

"With the coming of winter a more sheltered manner of living became a necessity. I was feeling stronger than ever in my life, and carried driftwood miles along the beach to the cove I had selected, which was snugly sheltered from the winds by the first great range of dunes. Here I built my shack and dug deep to the fresh water level. Work which a short time back would have been an impossibility only acted as a tonic. The rains found me snugly housed. When the necessity arose, I did a day's work on the nearby farms or sold a few clams. I began to live then, as I do now, largely on nuts, grains, and fruits. That within me which had lain so long unnourished, fed eagerly on the majestic beauty of the dunes and the ever changing loveliness of the sea."

Let me continue my friend's story. Many years have passed since that first winter in the dunes. Eager searching through the pages of the Bible was rewarded by under-

standing, and the constant plea, "O Father, let me be pure in thought, word, and deed! Let me show love toward all," was answered. His meager supply always proved adequate to meet the needs of those who came to his door. Many a winter he fed the hoboes and outcasts who drifted through his domain. And not only did he feed their bodies. The fare whether for mind or body was simple, but in its simplicity lay its strength.

The command "Thou shalt not kill" has no exceptions for this man. Here is an instance: One day he sat in meditation, to be aroused by the rattle of a snake. There beside him was coiled the rattler, head poised to strike. No fear entered the man's consciousness as he regarded his visitor. Rather a sense of wonder at its grace and beauty. He spoke softly to the snake, love tuning his voice. He compared the brilliance of its eyes to the Divine Fire. Slowly the reptile lowered its head and glided silently away.

There is no service too menial or hard for my friend to perform for the needy. Whether it be nursing a sick neighbor or harvesting his crop the task is done with equal cheerfulness. He is an old man now, yet his face is unlined, and from eyes which once mirrored the unspeakable horrors of life, there shines the light of purity, love, and understanding. This man lives his prayers, and in so doing, is an inspiration to all who come within his ken.

Gradually these prayers have taken an ordered form that he can share them with those who understand—this is how my friend gave some of them to me. They flow in a perpetual stream from his heart:

"God is the principle of the all-perfect Good.

God is Eternal Life, Infinite Love, the Absolute Truth, the One and only Being.

Man can become in His image, and likeness of His spiritual substance.

Man's sublime mission upon the earth plane is to gain an understanding heart, that he may reflect God in the flesh.

Christ is the manifestation of the Truth of God, a spiritual consciousness of the Infinite Mind of God in the heart of man, seeking expression.

The Father in me He doeth the works. . . .

I am the beloved of the Father; my integrity is within me, and I now see myself free, wise and immortal as God, the totality of Good.

I do this day adopt the ways of Truth and abandon every other way of doing, talking, and thinking. . . .

I am undiseased, unfettered, and unlimited.

I now abide in divine love; I am filled with divine power; I am guided, directed, and led by the most loving, adorable, truthful, just, wise, knowing, powerful, divine, pure, and holy God of all Good.

I am buoyant, joyful, happy, and strong.

I am this day at peace and alive with God; I am supported by His free spirit forever.

My words are Spirit; they are Truth; they shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that whereunto they are sent.

I am at one with Thee, oh most beautiful, loving, adorable, truthful, just, wise, knowing, powerful, divine, pure, and holy God, the Father within me. I am constantly surrounding myself with the rays and vibrations of Thy divine Love; evil has no power over me.

Oh, most loving, adorable God, the Father within me, Thou dwellest within me, doest the works within me also. Thy will is done within me as it is done in heaven, as it will be done on earth.

Thy will reigneth supreme within me forever.

Thy will is done within me forever.

Thy will ruleth within me forever. . . .

Thou art my Master, my most beautiful and holy Master; I have no other.

Thou art my Protector, my most beautiful and holy Protector; I have no other.

Thou art my Teacher, my most beautiful and holy Teacher; I have no other.

Thou art my Ruler, my most beautiful and holy Ruler; I have no other; Thou rulest within me forever. . . .

Thou art the Kingdom of Heaven within all mankind; they do not know it, but I would teach them so.

O, most beautiful God, most loving, adorable God, the Father within me, Thou art the One and Only Being that should be loved, adored, and worshipped by mankind; and mankind should love, adore, and worship Thee within themselves only, every day, forever, forever, forever.

O most loving, adorable God, The Father within me,
I do love, adore, and worship Thee with all the power of my heart.
I do love, adore, and worship Thee with all the Power of my soul.
I do love, adore, and worship Thee with all the power of my mind.
I do love, adore, and worship Thee with all the power of my being.
I do love, adore, and worship Thee with all the power of my Spirit."

No wonder, when imagination sets me free and I wander dreaming through the dunes, that my eyes search eagerly for a solitary figure seated, perhaps, on some hill top lost in a world we but dimly sense, or smilingly going about the humble tasks of his daily existence, and that at night when all things go to rest I hear in my heart his prayer before sleep:

"Mon Dieu, je me couche au nom de Vous, pour l'amour de Vous. Bonsoir, mon bon ange, à Vous je me recommende. Vous m'avez gardé aujourd'hui; gardez-moi dans cette nuit, s'il Vous plait, mon bon ange."

HOLY NATIVITIES

II.

SRI KRISHNA

(*As told by Sister Nivedita after the Hindu Scriptures.*)

Thousand of years ago in India there reigned, in the city of Mathura, a king called Kansa, who was known far and wide as a monster of cruelty. So oppressive was his rule that his subjects had but one prayer: deliverance from his tyrannical power. Indeed, he would have seemed to be lacking in all human qualities had it not been for the apparent affection he felt for his sister Devaki, and for the one to whom she was promised as wife — a noble by the name of Vasudeva. So far did he go in his good will toward these two as to act as their charioteer on the day of their wedding, with royal skill guiding the horses through the narrow streets toward the home of Vasudeva. All went happily until, suddenly, there spoke in the king's ear—or in his heart?—a Voice which said, "O tyrant! Thy days are numbered; for, in his twelfth year, the eighth son of this pair shall be thy slayer!" Instantly the king's love changed to bitter fear and hatred. Swiftly turning the chariot, he drove back to the palace, and, in its subterranean depths, imprisoned the unfortunate couple for life, that he might the more easily do away with any child that might be born to them. Seven times Devaki had gone through the joy and the pain of motherhood, and each

*From "Cradle Tales of Hinduism."

time, save one—when a son Balaram had been spirited away on the plea that he was already dead—she had seen her babe destroyed by the cruel hands of Kansa. Now the time was at hand when the fated eighth child was to be born, upon whom the prophecy centered, and breathless, they awaited the coming—Kansa in his palace, Devaki and Vasudeva in their prison—of him who was ordained to be the deliverer of his people.

Outside, the wind wailed, and the rain fell, and the waters of the Jumna rose, as if in flood. The night was wild, whereon would come to earth Krishna, the Holy Child. . . Terrible was the time of watching, while the storm howled without, and in the heart of poor Devaki the hope and love of a mother struggled with sadness and fear.

Slowly, slowly the hours went by, till midnight. And then, just as the bell of the great water-clock outside the palace began to boom out the hour, the hearts of the mother and father were filled with joy, for at that very moment their Babe had come to them. In that one brief instant, as she held him in her arms, Devaki forgot the ordeal of the morrow, forgot the cruel death that awaited her Child, and knew only the bliss of the mother who welcomes the newly-born.

At the moment of His birth, the prison was filled with a soft light, streaming out from the Babe Himself, and, as He lay back in His mother's lap, they saw shining out from behind Him four arms. One hand held the *shank* or battle trumpet; another the discus; a third the mace; and in the fourth was a lotus on its stem. Then Devaki and Vasudeva knew these for the signs of Vishnu, and they worshipped the Child—saying the salutations—as Narayan, Saviour of the World. But as the salutations ended, the veil of Maya (illusion) descended upon them once more, and the Child ap-

peared to them as their own babe. All about them now, however, they heard voices. At first they did not trust to their own ears, thinking the sounds were of the wind and rain. But presently, listening, they heard distinctly the words, "Arise! Take the young Child, and leave Him in the house of Nanda, Chief of the Cowherds, in the village of Gokool, and bring hither the girl-child who has just been born there."

What could be meant by telling a prisoner, unable to leave his prison, to rise and carry a baby to a village on the far side of the Jumna? . . . Yet the feeling of some incomprehensible power was strong upon them, and they were full of terror for the fate of the Child on the morrow. So Vasudeva yielded himself to the bidding of the unknown. He arose, lifted the Babe, covered Him with his own garment, and, staff in hand, went forward to the prison-entrance. To his amazement, the bolts slid back, the locks turned, the chains fell softly, and the heavy doors swung outwards of their own accord before him. Outside, the guards and soldiers slumbered heavily, and no one woke, as Vasudeva, with the Babe Krishna hidden beneath his robe, passed into the open road.

Here the storm was even worse than it had sounded from within the prison. Heavily the warm rain fell, and the winds raged, and the man's heart was heavy with foreboding as he listened to the rushing of the great river in the distance, and wondered how he should reach its further bank.

At this very moment, in the darkness before him, he saw a jackal, and silently resolved to take the wild creature as his guide. On went the animal; on followed the man, until they came to the river-side. Then the jackal plunged in at a certain place, and proceeded to make his way over; and Vasudeva, seeing that here there must be a ford, step after

step went across in his wake. And men say that in the guise of this jackal, for protection of the Divine Child, it was Durga, Queen of Heaven and Mother of the Universe, who had come to earth that night.

But it is told that, as they went, the Babe grew heavier and heavier in His father's arms, till all at once, He slipped and would have drowned, only just in time he caught Him back and bore Him safely on. For Mother Jumna also longed to take the Lord into her keeping, and fold Him for a moment to her breast.

At last came Vasudeva with his precious burden to the village of Gokool, and to the dwelling-place of Nanda, the King of Cowherds. Softly the door of the great farmhouse opened before him, and, still obeying the same gentle guidance that had led him forth from the prison, he entered, and saw a light burning in the first room within the doorway. The lamp stood by the bedside of a sleeping mother and a new-born child. Quietly, quietly Vasudeva bent down and exchanged the children. To the farmer-chieftain's wife he gave the Babe he carried, and from her side he took the little daughter who slept there. Then, without a word, he turned and went back by the way he had come, to the dungeons of Kansa, in the city of Mathura, and gave the girl-child of Nanda to his own wife, Devaki.

Great was the rejoicing amongst the cowherds when they all woke up in the morning and found that the child whom they remembered as a girl was really a boy. For this was the only explanation of the mystery that occurred to them. It is said, indeed, that that morning there was no food to eat in the house of Nanda, for all the pots of milk and curd fell from the hands of the women when they heard the news, in their astonishment and delight. Then thousands of people came, and every one was fed, and wealth

was distributed, and there was great rejoicing. . . .

But in the stronghold of Kansa, it was told in the morning that a child had been born in the night to Devaki and Vasudeva. Then was the heart of the tyrant hot within him, and he came down into the dungeons in person, attended by all his guards. . . . To the king's amazement, however, he found that the child was not a boy at all, but a girl. . . . The very unexpectedness of the event enraged him, and he put out his hand to seize the babe by the foot, and dash it to pieces against the prison walls. As he touched it, however, to the astonishment of all present, the seeming child slipped from his grasp, and, high above their heads, rose the shining form of a goddess. "He who shall slay thee, O King, is even now growing to manhood," she said mockingly, "in the village of Gokool on the far side of the Jumna," and then, as they looked, the radiant being faded away, and none could tell even the direction in which she had disappeared.

But wrath and mortification filled the heart of Kansa the Tyrant, and for many a long year thereafter he knew no rest, in his burning zeal to outwit the gods, and end the life of the Child Krishna, ere yet he should be old enough to become his slayer.

(And it is written that, in his eagerness to do away with Him, he gave orders that all the new-born children throughout the realm should be put to death, in the hope that amongst them might be the One he sought. But although he brought the agony of loss to the hearts of countless parents, the tiny Krishna, by His divine powers, escaped every treachery that the king was able to plan against Him. Moreover, the Holy Books tell us that, under the tender care of His foster parents, the little Krishna developed into a miracle of adorable mischief, irresistible love, and holiness. Not

only did he conquer the hearts of all his human companions, but the birds and the beasts sought his blessing and protection, and even the river Jumna, so it is recorded in the Scriptures, turned its course so as to touch His feet.)

REPORT

VEDANTA CENTRE OF BOSTON

This report of the December activities will come to readers at such a late date that it seems best to give it only in brief for the sake of record.

In Boston, Christmastide was as always the occasion for two memorable Services at the Vedanta Centre—one on Christmas Eve, and the other on the eve of the New Year. Boston is generally wrapped in snow at this season, so that the flowers which deck her altars seem by contrast even more fragrant and delicate than those picked under June skies, and, in combination with the flickering flame of candle and vigil-light, lend an ethereal atmosphere of holiness to these occasions of worship.

Perhaps, of the two, the New Year Service was the most poignant in its tender appeal; the hour, the waiting world, the riot of sound outside, all contributing to the hush of its peace. And this time, just before the whistles and bells commenced their clamor, Swami Paramananda had the happy inspiration to ask the congregation to repeat in unison his poem, "Children of Light," with its beautiful refrain:

"Children of Light, walk in the light,
Let all darkness vanish from your path!"

With these words on their lips, the members of the Boston Centre entered into the New Year.

ANANDA-ASHRAMA

California's Christmas was a rare and lovely one—blue

overhead and caressing sunshine. At the Ananda-Ashrama, in the Temple of the Universal Spirit, there was the usual Christmas Eve Service, which, because of Swami Paramananda's absence in the east, was conducted by Srimati Gayatri Devi, who made articulate the living spirit of the day. Following the Service, after a short interim of carol singing, she helped make the same spirit visible in a tableau of the Nativity, in which she, the Madonna, in a very real manger, leaned over the crude crib of her Son, the light from Whose countenance reflected up into her face. Wonderingly, St. Joseph kept watch, while outside, from the real hills, sounding ever nearer and nearer till they seemed in the very hearts of the people present, floated angel voices singing the glad refrain: "Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth; good will toward men!"

Immediately preceding the tableau, Miss Doris Booth, a gifted member of the Ashrama, danced an interpretation of the famous carol, "Minuit Chretiens!" and remained in the scene as an adoring angel.

During rehearsals an effort had been made to induce the Ashrama donkey to stick his head through the manger window and eat of the hay just below; but, unfortunately, he seemed suspicious of the whole proceeding, and refused to co-operate. Otherwise, the picture would have been complete.

SPECIAL NOTICE

By an unfortunate chance, the manuscript for the January "Message" was lost with a wrecked mail-plane, and has never been recovered. This has necessitated a reassembling of this issue, and a delay all along the line. We trust that our readers will forgive and will feel that the January, February, and possibly March numbers have not lost their interest because of their late appearance.

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Message of the East

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An Explorer of the Spirit

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
Published Monthly except in August and September

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PASSAGE TO INDIA

By Walt Whitman

(An excerpt from the poem)

PASSAGE to more than India!
O secret of the earth and sky! . . .
O morning red! O clouds! O rain and snows!
O day and night, passage to you!
O sun and moon and all you stars! Sirius and Jupiter!
Passage to you!

Passage, immediate passage! the blood burns in my veins!
Away, O soul, hoist instantly the anchor!
Cut the hawsers—haul out—shake out every sail!
Have we not stood here like trees in the ground long enough?
Have we not grovel'd long enough, eating and drinking like mere brutes?
Have we not darken'd and dazed ourselves with books long enough?

Sail forth—steer for the deep waters only,
Reckless, O soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me,
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
and we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.

O my brave soul!
O farther, farther sail!
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?
O farther, farther, farther sail!

AN EXPLORER OF THE SPIRIT

By Swami Paramananda

(An Address delivered at the Temple of the Universal Spirit, Ananda-Ashrama, on the occasion of the birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna, March 2, 1930.)

Even through its traditions we gain real spiritual insight into the heart of a nation. So this morning, as we observe the birthday of Sir Ramakrishna, I am reminded of how it represents the heart of India.

Why is it that India honors spiritual men and women rather than those we call "the great"—the conquerors, kings, and emperors? Because her heart beats in a different rhythm. Spiritual art and interest—there is where she lays her accent.

Why should a great multitude come and pay homage to a soul such as Sri Ramakrishna is? I say "is," because such men live; they do not die like ordinary human beings who carry the thought of mortality, and who, fastening their interest to perishable things, also perish, leaving nothing of durable existence.

Why should people glorify the memory of a man who wanted nothing for himself, and whose life, if we analyze it from the surface, was of the humblest?

It is very difficult to speak about a personage who is like the sky, or the water of the ocean. The ocean has its ripples and waves, but fundamentally it is an unchanging reality. So it is with Sri Ramakrishna. Let me try to draw a picture before you. It is not that I am going to recite a little bit of history—how this man lived at such and such a time, and these were his characteristics; we are dealing with subtler principles. How many do we find, especially in our modern life, who live wholly for God? Practically none. That is why it is so hard for the average mind to understand Sri

Ramakrishna. We may know individuals who think sometimes about God, who have a partial interest along with the many interests of life; but here was one who had no other thought, no other interest. At once we are reminded of the words of Christ: "First seek ye the Kingdom of God. . . ." With Sri Ramakrishna there was nothing that could sever his interest from that fundamental Principle.

Racial differences, religious differences, differences of tradition all melt away as we come face to face with real men. That is the reason I am interested in observing this day, not merely because it is the anniversary of one who lived in India, but because it gives us the opportunity to honor a soul who is the living interpretation of the name this temple bears—the "Temple of the Universal Spirit."

One day, many years ago, when I was only a little lad, I was fired with a thought from Sri Ramakrishna: when milk is churned early in the morning—all fresh and fragrant—the butter comes quickly; it can then be thrown into a body of water and still remain intact. But let a man mix milk with water, and he cannot separate them. Just so—early, early—we must give our thought to God. The milk of our life must not be allowed to mix with the water of the world.

How simple and how refreshing this is, and what a tremendous impression it made upon me! No theological dogma—no metaphysical discussion—only the desire to lead the life! Teaching like this, however, is not for the casual man or for the dogmatic soul; it is for the man who lives, who is interested in fundamental principles; and as such we find Sri Ramakrishna standing as a towering genius. He had no quarrel with any sect—Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsees, Jains or Christians. And the strange thing was, that when he desired to investigate any one of them, the followers of that sect would flock to him spontaneously in great numbers.

He was a spiritual explorer. I have never used that expression before in relation to him, but I like to call him that. We have our explorers of sea and land—men who take great risks, who go into inaccessible regions—but here was one who desired to explore the most difficult regions of man's being, and who, when he attained his goal through his own chosen path, did not say like most men, "I am an illumined soul; my religion is the only religion!" On the contrary, he was absolutely devoid of all self-seeking and desire for personal honor. Although he had practically no education and had not widened his viewpoint through travel, he was able to draw to him great men from all parts of India. It is not how much book learning a man may have that counts, or how many theories he may carry in his brain, but how exalted his life has become. Sri Ramakrishna's education was from the higher Sources; all his light came to him as he sat on the seat of contemplation. His mind was like a razor; it cut through everything—through all foolishness, all sham, all deception and superstition.

Early in his boyhood he decided that he was not going to be taught in the usual way, with the objective of becoming a rich man, or of making a business success. If there was anything in knowledge, he felt that he must acquire it first hand from Divinity, and that Divinity he called "The Mother." "Thou art my Mother; Thou must come and speak to me!" It was a passion of the soul! Evening after evening he would cry out in agony, with his face in the dust, "Another day has passed and I have not attained God!" Passers-by, business men, people who were hard and cold, even these men would say, "He may be mad, he may be an insane person, but we cannot bear to see him suffer so. May he have his heart's prayers fulfilled!" You see it was his genuineness that they felt. But, as I said, I am not going to

analyze. You cannot analyze nature. More and more as I live on this mountain top and see the sublime aspects of it, more and more do I remain silent; it is so varied, so deep, so profound, so unspeakably beautiful; and Sri Ramakrishna was like that.

Men and women are tired of just words, without their living expression. It is what is bringing impoverishment to our temples and churches today. Therefore how refreshing it is when we find a man who stands up without any credentials, without any studied effect or desire to put himself forward—a man who shines in clear light. That is my picture of Sri Ramakrishna—a clear light. He did not want people to honor him; he had no desire to preach the gospel of Truth before mankind, but he had love in his heart—passion of love—so much so that he never thought of himself. One day, in the last part of his life when he was suffering greatly, his disciples tried to hold aloof from him one who had deep longing to see him. "Sir," they said, "You must not give yourself so freely!" But he replied, "Let the man come. I would give hundreds of lives to save one single being!" There you find the genuine hunger and thirst of his soul. That is why he was indeed a leader, why India pays him homage today. And not only India—he has become a spiritual magnet for the whole world. His life was exactly like the parable he so often repeated: a lotus does not have to send out an invitation to the bees. When the lotus blossoms, the bees come of their own accord. Why do we grow impatient? Why are we so anxious for a little name or fame? Let us become the thing itself, then even if we die in silence, we shall inspire and help mankind.

Two years ago I was in India on Sri Ramakrishna's birthday. And what a day it was! There must have been a hundred thousand people assembled to pay homage to this

man who had no title, no wealth, who was not learned, but who lived for God and died for Him. Not people of his own creed—he had none—but men of all denominations and of all lands. Having just come from America, I was asked to preside over the Guest House, and I cannot tell you how many Europeans gathered there. Food is always served in honor of this day, and who renders this service? The young spirit of India. This is significant, because religion is not very palatable to the young. I remember hearing Swami Vivekananda say that he rather shrank from it until he came face to face with a man who made it a living reality.

Religion, as it was embodied in Sri Ramakrishna, was no sham, no doctrine, no dogma, no trying to impose something of solemn nature; it was light; it was lovely; it was joyous—joyousness was one of his characteristics—no long face—no agony! The All-blissful Mother became his passion—the Mother of the Universe who wants to see Her children happy. "Thou art my Mother; I am Thy son!" thus he established this logical, beautiful, delicate, poetic relationship with his Deity.

Unless a man be born again of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God! Sri Ramakrishna was born again, and remained like a child. Even when he grew up in the physical sense, it was not his egotistic nature, but the voice of the Mother that spoke through him, therefore it was clear and unmistakable. Whenever men paid him homage, he gave all the glory to the Mother. The same thing we find in Christ when He says: "Tell no man. It is not my will but the Father's will fulfilled through me." Such beings give us a very close glimpse of the beauty that abides in God.

Know, my friends, that unless our religion is living, we

cannot influence anyone. Who is a Christian? He who lives the teachings of Christ. Sri Ramakrishna was one of the greatest of Christians. If I wanted to learn anything about Christ I would go to him. There was no dogmatic spirit there, nor was there any arrogance or fanatical zeal —only pure light that overwhelms us, and gives us our own inherent sight.

In our "Book of Daily Thoughts and Prayers" we read for this day: "The biggest, the best thing you can do is to unfold your higher qualities." That is all Sri Ramakrishna did, all he was interested in. He wanted to talk about God. Sometimes he wept because he was not able to express his thoughts or sing his songs to those who could understand. He used to go to the temple tower and cry out, "Where are you, my children, to whom I may open my heart?" Often he was in agony. Would you not be in agony if you had some great artistic sense and were thrown with people who had no sympathy with you whatever, and no understanding. Sri Ramakrishna longed to speak his language to those who were pure, and untainted by the world.

I am reminded of a song he used to sing:

"Dive deep, dive deep, my soul, into the ocean of Infinite Beauty."

One day, in relation to this, there was a great discussion among his disciples as to whether a mortal who dared to dive deep into that Ocean would or would not lose his individuality. Swami Vivekananda was then only a lad of eighteen years. Sri Ramakrishna said to him, "How do you feel about it, Naren? Suppose there were a cup of nectar before you and you wanted to taste of it, how would you do it?"

"I would sit on the edge of the cup," said Naren, "and drink carefully so I would not fall in and get drowned."

"My son," replied Sri Ramakrishna, "there is no death, no fear of death in God!"

We are all so afraid: we want the beautiful things that are promised us for the Kingdom of God, and, at the same time, we cling with tenacious rigidity to the things of this world. If someone comes with that which is beautiful, that which we desire, how can we take it if our hands are already full? How can we take the spiritual treasure if our mind and heart are filled with thoughts of self and self-interest, with fear, worries, and mortal cares? These are practical facts, my friends; we cannot have two things possessing us at once. If we desire the spiritual, we must be bereft of the terrestrial. That was Sri Ramakrishna's passion—one-pointed devotion to the Ideal.

His greatest chant was: "Naham, naham—tuhu, tuhu!" Not I, not I, but Thou! Very similar it is to what Christ said: "Not my will be done, but Thine!" Every day—morning, noon, and nightfall—he used to repeat: "Thou art the Doer; I am only the instrument!" What a wonderful artist a man could be, what infinite gifts he would have if he could be free of all calculation: "I am Thy instrument, O, Supreme Spirit! do Thou play on me, and there will be beautiful music, unmistakable melodies; inspiration will come, because there will be nothing to bar thy pure music from flowing!" That was Sri Ramakrishna's perpetual song; that was his secret—his strength lay there.

Certain teachers attract us for the time being; we are, as someone has said, intellectually tickled by them; but when we move on, we forget. No one who contacted Sri Ramakrishna could ever forget. And his influence goes on spreading. It is like the perfume of a flower; it lingers, it is delicate, yet powerful and very potent; it inspires and transforms our life because it is genuine, and free of all dogma. There is nothing dead about it; it is pure, shining, radiant; it flows in a mighty current of Light, and when our thoughts

are unobstructed, and we are not guided by preconceived ideas, that Light shines through us. What a wonderful blessing when all mortals can become like that!

Modern philosophies are laying emphasis on the ego—I—I—I! Yet the only egotist we recognize as such is the man who is blustering and aggressive. Anyone, however, who does not know his relationship with Deity, who is blinded by ignorance, is an egotist—the man who connects himself with his poverty, his weakness, his failure, quite as much as that one who identifies himself with his wealth, his learning or his success. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that there were two kinds of ego—the ripe and the unripe. When a man boasts: "Do you know who I am? I am So-and-so! These riches are all mine! I am powerful! I am clever!" that is the unripe ego. The other, the ripe ego, says: "Not I, but Thou! I am Thy son—Thy child. Thou art the Doer, and I am the instrument! Thou playest on me; Thou guidest me!" Infinite strength lies behind that!

We cannot say when we look at Sri Ramakrishna's picture that he was a handsome man—I am speaking very freely because these things come up—but the Light shining through him overcame all blemishes. He was a possessor of the Infinite, and men felt it when they came into his presence. We are all possessors of the Infinite, but we do not know it. Will it not inspire us to have that knowledge? Knowledge, however, is not enough; there must be the realization—the life. God-like men are very different from ordinary individuals. I can speak with conviction, for I have known the type. In honor and dishonor they are the same; they seek nothing for themselves. That is the reason the world seeks them. And there can be no pretence: "I am going to pretend to seek nothing, so that I may be honored." There is a Divine Intelligence which sees and decides, and

which gives everything. If you can bring yourself to the point where your whole being is focused on the Divine and you ask nothing but that, seeking the Kingdom of God with your heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and all your powers, then you will be indeed a Christian, and nothing will be lacking—nothing can be lacking to you then. And of this Sri Ramakrishna was the living example.

Although he was born in a village, and was, as I have told you, unlettered, his vision was so great, vast, deep, and profound that he was able to meet all men—Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians—with such understanding spirit that the Mohammedans thought he was their saint, different Hindu sects claimed him, while the Christians felt that he was the incarnation of the very teachings of Christ. This is the way we become universal: not by trying to form new codes and new principles that we may recite or put into a volume, not by creating something of material interest, but by having an understanding soul, by tuning our heart with the wholeness of the Cosmic. At once we feel ourselves part of Infinitude, and, whether we speak or not, we give expression to that great Love. It was not so much that Sri Ramakrishna taught a new principle, it was that he brought forward the old principles with such tremendous emphasis that they became living.

His missionary spirit was very similar to that of Lord Buddha, who sent forth his disciples with this charge: "Go ye forth for the good of many and the happiness of many!" That is why I am here among you today. I would not have given twenty-four years of my life in what might seem a foreign land, did I not have from Sri Ramakrishna the incentive and inspiration that life is one and all-abiding, and that I am yours as much as I am of India. God is One; men worship Him differently according to their concept. Truth is One; we worship that Truth according to our understand-

ing of It. It is infinite and universal. This concept Sri Ramakrishna made living in his thoughts, his actions, his daily habits. Whenever he saw any place of worship, any temple, synagogue, or church, he would salute it; for he said, "Wherever there are thoughts of God, wherever men pray to Him, that place is holy—there we should bow down!" From beginning to end there was nothing fictitious in his life or character.

One time, when Swami Vivekananda had just returned from the Occident, someone attacked Sri Ramakrishna to him, calling him nothing but a mad man, a superstitious worshipper who paid homage even to idols or symbols. Swami Vivekananda, with his illumined intelligence, said: "Let us have many more mad men like him for India—more superstitious idolators who see God everywhere and worship Him in everything, and who forget their own selfish interest in their love for Him and for humanity!" This gives you Sri Ramakrishna's stature. All else is of secondary interest. He lives today in spirit, and inspires mankind. Knowing Him, a Christian can become a better Christian, a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Mohammedan, a purer follower of his own particular faith. He asks no man to renounce his religion. Each is free to follow his chosen path. Renunciation is necessary, however, in order to come to God. We need to renounce our suspicion, our selfishness, our egotism, our greed, and our ignorance. For as we renounce these, we find unity; we find solace, and we find brotherhood on a constructive basis.

This, my friends, is the message of Sri Ramakrishna. And it is not a small message. It has indestructible value, because it is built upon life, upon purity, upon holiness, and not upon any self-chosen creed or dryness of philsophy. This is what Sri Ramakrishna preached, if one can say that he preached. For he himself was his own gospel; his teaching was through his life.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

. . . . . Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.

—*Alfred Tennyson*

But when the soul giveth heed with her proper faculty, she is at once away and off into that other world of Purity, Eternity, Immortality, and things unchanging. . . . And this state of the soul is called Understanding. —*Plato*

The man of God is like a large leafy tree planted in fertile ground. It blossometh, it doubleth its yield of fruit in the summer. It hath its place before the face of its Lord. Its foliage is sweet, the shadow thereof is pleasant, and it is carried at its end into the groves of God.

—*From the teachings of Amen-Em-Apt*

I am certain of nothing but the holiness of the heart's affection and the truth of Imagination. What the Imagination seizes as Beauty must be Truth. . . . The Imagination may be compared to Adams' dream: he awoke and found it truth. —*John Keats*

Ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands, but like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and, following them, you reach your destiny. —*Carl Schurz*

Better than sovereignty over earth, better than birth into heaven, than lordship over all the worlds, is the reward of entering the stream of holiness. —*Gautama Buddha*

PRACTICAL BASIS OF MYSTICISM

By Evelyn Underhill

(An excerpt from her book "Mysticism." Published by E. P. Dutton and Company, New York.)

The most highly developed branches of the human family have in common one peculiar characteristic. They tend to produce—sporadically it is true, and usually in the teeth of adverse external circumstances—a curious and definite type of personality; a type which refuses to be satisfied with that which other men can experience, and is inclined, in the words of its enemies, to "deny the world in order that it may find reality." We meet these persons in the east and the west; in the ancient, mediaeval, and modern worlds. Their one passion seems to be the prosecution of a certain spiritual and intangible quest: the finding of a "way out" or a "way back" to some desirable state in which alone they can satisfy their craving for absolute truth. This quest, for them, has constituted the whole meaning of life; they have made for it, without effort, sacrifices which have appeared enormous to other men; and it is an indirect testimony to its objective actuality, that whatever the place or period in which they have arisen, their aims, doctrines, and methods have been substantially the same. Their experience, therefore, forms a body of evidence, curiously self-consistent and often mutually explanatory, which must be taken into account before we can add up the sum of the energies and potentialities of the human spirit, or reasonably speculate on its relations to the unknown world which lies outside the boundaries of sense.

All men, at one time or another, have fallen in love with the veiled Isis whom they call Truth. With most, this has been but a passing passion; they have early seen its hopelessness and turned to more practical things. But there are

others who remain all their lives the devout lovers of reality; though the manner of their love, the vision which they make unto themselves of the beloved object, varies enormously.

. . . .

Under whatever symbols they may have objectified their quest, none of these seekers have ever been able to assure the world that they have found, seen face to face, the Reality behind the veil. But if we may trust the reports of the mystics—and they are reports given with a strange accent of certainty and good faith—they have succeeded where all these others have failed in establishing immediate communication between the spirit of man, entangled, as they declare, amongst material things, and that "only Reality," that immaterial and final Being, which some philosophers call the Absolute, and most theologians call God. This, they say—and here many who are not mystics agree with them—is the hidden Truth which is the object of man's craving; the only satisfying goal of his quest. Hence, they should claim from us the same attention that we give to other explorers of countries in which we are not competent to adventure ourselves; for the mystics are the pioneers of the spiritual world, and we have no right to deny validity to their discoveries, merely because we lack the opportunity or the courage necessary to those who would prosecute such explorations for themselves. So remote, however, are these matters from our ordinary habits of thought, that their investigation entails, in all those who would attempt to understand them, a certain definite preparation: a purging of the intellect. As with those who came of old to the Mysteries, purification is here the gate of knowledge. We must come to this encounter with minds cleared of prejudice and convention, must deliberately break with our inveterate habit of taking the "visible world" for granted; our lazy

assumption that somehow science is "real" and metaphysics is not. . . .

Let us then begin at the beginning, and remind ourselves of a few of the trite and primary facts which all practical persons agree to ignore. That beginning, for human thought, is of course the I, the Ego, the self-conscious subject which is writing this book, or the other self-conscious subject which is reading it, and which declares in the teeth of all arguments, I AM. . . .

To this I, this self-conscious self "imprisoned in the body like an oyster in his shell," comes, as we know, a constant stream of messages and experiences. . . . What do these experiences mean? The first answer of the unsophisticated self of course is, that they indicate the nature of the external world: it is to the "evidence of her senses" that she turns, when she is asked what that world is like. From the messages received through those senses, which pour in on her whether she will or no, batter upon her gateways at every instant and from every side, she constructs that "sense-world" which is the "real and solid world" of normal men. As the impressions come in. . . she sorts, accepts, rejects, combines; and then triumphantly produces from them a "concept" which *is,* she says, the external world. With an enviable and amazing simplicity she attributes her own sensations to the unknown universe. The stars, she says, *are* bright; the grass *is* green. For her, as for the philosopher Hume, "reality consists of impressions and ideas."

It is immediately apparent, however, that this sense-world, this seemingly real external universe—though it may be useful and valid in other respects—cannot be *the* external world, but only the self's projected picture of it. It is a work of art, not a scientific fact; and, whilst it may well possess the profound significance proper to great works

of art, is dangerous if treated as a subject of analysis. Very slight investigation will be enough to suggest that it is a picture whose relation to reality is at best symbolic and approximate, and which would have no meaning for selves whose senses, or channels of communication, happened to be arranged upon a different plan. . . . Did some mischievous Demiurge choose to tickle our sensory apparatus in a new way, we should receive by this act a new universe. . . .

I say, for instance, that "I see" a house. I can only mean by this that the part of my receiving instrument which undertakes the duty called vision is affected in a certain way, and arouses in my mind the idea "house". . . . I may, of course, call in one sense to "corroborate," as we trustfully say, the evidence of the other; may approach the house, and touch it. Then the nerves of my hand will be affected by a sensation which I translate as hardness and solidity; the eye by a peculiar and wholly incomprehensible sensation called redness; and from these purely personal changes my mind constructs and externalizes an idea which it calls "red bricks." Science herself, however, if she be asked to verify the reality of these perceptions, at once declares that, though the material world be real, the ideas of solidity and color are but hallucination. . . .

"The red brick," says Science, "is a mere convention. In reality that bit, like all other bits of the universe, consists, so far as I know at present, of innumerable atoms whirling and dancing one about the other. It is no more solid than a snowstorm. Were you to eat of Alice in Wonderland's mushroom and shrink to dimensions of the infra-world, each atom might seem to you a planet, and the red brick itself a universe. Moreover, these atoms themselves elude me as I try to grasp them. They are only manifestations of something else. . . . As for redness, as you call it,

that is a question of the relation between your optic nerve and the light waves which it is unable to absorb. This evening, when the sun slopes, your brick will probably be purple; a very little deviation from normal vision on your part would make it green. Even the sense that the object of perception is outside yourself may be fancy; since you as easily attribute this external quality to images seen in dreams, and to waking hallucinations, as you do to those objects which, as you absurdly say, are *really there*". . . .

Why, after all, take as our standard a material world whose existence is affirmed by nothing more trustworthy than the sense-impressions of "normal men;" those imperfect and easily cheated channels of communication? The mystics, those adventurers of whom we spoke. . . have always declared, implicitly or explicitly, their distrust in these channels of communication. They have never for an instant been deceived by phenomena, nor by the careful logic of the industrious intellect. One after another, with extraordinary unanimity, they have rejected that appeal to the unreal world of appearance which is the standard of all sensible men: affirming that there is another way, another secret, by which the conscious self may reach the actuality which it seeks. More complete in their grasp of experience than the votaries of intellect or of sense, they accept as central for life those spiritual messages which are mediated to the self by religion, by beauty, and by pain. More reasonable than the rationalists, they find in that very hunger for reality which is the mother of all metaphysics, an implicit proof that such reality exists; that there is something else, some final satisfaction, beyond the ceaseless stream of sensation which besieges consciousness. "In that thou hast sought me, thou hast already found me," says the voice of Absolute Truth in their ears. This is the first doctrine of mys-

ticism. Its next is that only insofar as the self is real can it hope to *know* Reality: like to like: *Cor ad cor loquitur.* Upon the propositions implicit in these two laws the whole claim and practice of the mystic life depends.

"Finite as we are," they say—and here they speak not for themselves, but for the race—"lost though we seem to be in the woods or in the wide air's wilderness, in this world of time and of change, we have still, like the strayed animals or like the migrating birds, our homing instinct. . . . We seek. That is a fact. We seek a city still out of sight. In the contrast with this goal, we live. But if this be so, then already we possess something of Being even in our finite seeking. For the readiness to seek is already something of an attainment, even if a poor one."

Further, in this our finite seeking we are not wholly dependent on that homing instinct. For some, who have climbed to the hill-tops, that city is not really out of sight. The mystics see it clearly They report to us concerning it. Science and metaphysics may do their best and their worst: but these pathfinders of the spirit never falter in their statements concerning "that independent spiritual world which is the only goal of pilgrim man." They say that messages come to him from that spiritual world, that complete reality which we call Absolute: that we are not, after all, hermetically sealed from it. To all selves who will receive it, news comes every hour of the day of a world of Absolute Life, Absolute Beauty, Absolute Truth, beyond the bourne of time and place; news that most of us translate—and inevitably distort in the process—into the language of religion, of beauty, of love, or of pain.

Of all those forms of life and thought with which humanity has fed its craving for truth, mysticism alone postulates, and in the persons of its great initiates proves, not only the

existence of the Absolute, but also this link: this possibility first of knowing, finally of attaining it. It denies that possible knowledge is to be limited (*a*) to sense impressions, (*b*) to any process of intellectation, (*c*) to the unfolding of the content of normal consciousness. Such diagrams of experience, it says, are hopelessly incomplete. The mystics find the basis of their method not in logic but in life; in the existence of a discoverable "real," a spark of true being, within the seeking subject which can, in that ineffable experience which they call the "act of union," fuse itself with and thus apprehend the reality of the sought Object. In theological language, their theory of knowledge is that the spirit of man, itself essentially divine, is capable of immediate communion with God, the One Reality.*

In mysticism, that love of truth which we saw as the beginning of all philosophy leaves the merely intellectual sphere, and takes on the assured aspect of a personal passion. Where the philosopher guesses and argues, the mystic lives and looks; and speaks, consequently, the disconcerting language of first-hand experience, not the neat dialectic of the schools. Hence, whilst the Absolute of the metaphysicians remains a diagram—impersonal and unattainable—the Absolute of the mystics is lovable, attainable, alive.

"Oh, taste and see!" they cry, in accents of astounding certainty and joy. "Ours is an experimental science. We can but communicate our system, never its result. We come to you not as thinkers, but as doers. Leave your deep and absurd trust in the senses, with their language of dot

*The idea of Divine Union as man's true end is, of course, of immeasurable antiquity. Its first definite appearance in the religious consciousness of Europe seems to coincide with the establishment of the Orphic Mysteries in Greece and Southern Italy in the sixth century B.C. See Adam, "The Religious Teachers of Greece," p. 92. It is also found in the Hermetic writings, which vary between the fifth and second century B.C.

and dash, which may possibly report fact, but can never communicate personality. If philosophy has taught you anything, she has surely taught you the length of her tether, and the impossibilty of attaining to the doubtless admirable grazing land which lies beyond it. One after another, idealists have arisen who, straining frantically at the rope, have announced to the world their approaching liberty; only to be flung back at last into the little circle of sensation. But here we are, a small family, it is true, yet one that refuses to die out, assuring you that we have slipped the knot and are free of those grazing grounds. This is evidence which you are bound to bring into account before you can add up the sum total of possible knowledge; for you will find it impossible to prove that the world as seen by the mystics, 'unimaginable, formless, dark with excess of bright,' is less real than that which is expounded by the youngest and most promising demonstrator of a physico-chemical universe. We will be quite candid with you. Examine us as much as you like: our machinery, our veracity, our results. We cannot promise that you shall see what we have seen, for here each man must adventure for himself; but we defy you to stigmatize our experiences as impossible or invalid. Is your world of experience so well and logically founded that you dare make of it a standard? Philosophy tells you that it is founded on nothing better than the reports of your sensory apparatus and the traditional concepts of the race. Certainly it is imperfect, probably it is illusion; in any event, it never touches the foundation of things. Whereas what the world, which truly knows *nothing,* calls 'mysticism,' is the science of *ultimates*. . . the science of self-evident Reality, which cannot be 'reasoned about,' because it is the object of pure reason or perception."

SHAVARI'S VIGIL

By Srimati Gayatri Devi

Through the grace of Rama, the Lord, all Shavari's sins were washed away, and easily, in His presence, she ascended to heaven. —*Ramayana*

Who can understand the breathless yearning of the soul through endless time, awaiting the Vision? Who will measure the bliss, the agony, the peace, and the eager restlessness of the watching hours? And when the Vision comes, does the soul find her consummation in it, or does she crave more? Let Love tell her own story.

. . . . .

She was Shavari, Queen of the night—not golden like the sunbeam, but dark as water in the dusk. The poet spoke nothing of her beauty; still I knew those eyes! None can describe their reality. Looking into their fathomless depth, the prophet declared, "It is she who shall look upon the glory of That One!"

Will the Lord favor Shavari with His presence? She wondered in the stillness of her heart, and faintly understood. But when? At what blessed moment? There lay the mystery.

Reader, see her through my eyes; the dew shines like stars upon her disheveled hair, as she gathers flowers for her Beloved. They kiss her untouched body, and make her cheeks tinged like the gentle dawn. And those eyes! I do not know their language. They conceal the watchful expectancy, the unspoken longing of a wakeful night. How through the unbroken peace of the dark she has waited for His coming, and waited in vain! When the breeze embraced the frail leaves, Shavari's heart stopped. Does she hear His footsteps? And when the morning air brought her the message of the newly opened buds, she trembled with

joy. This must be the fragrance of His body. But where —where is He?

. . . . .

Shavari sits at her door. Her flowers, lying on the bare cushion eager for the touch of His Feet, lose their perfume; and the scorching sun steals away the beauty and life of the garlands hanging on the door, leaving all in utter despair and nothingness. Alas! will He never come? Will all be in vain?

O, thou bleeding heart, weep! And make thy garland with pearls of tears! Thou shalt adorn Him with the crown of thy sorrow. Tear thy heart to pieces, and strew them at His Feet!

. . . . .

Reader, come with me.

My Shavari has seen all her grey hair. She has heard the whisper, "The time is nigh for thee to leave. Thou hast lost thy all for Him, but He has not come." Can she believe this? Ah, no—no! He must come! Can He ever fail? But oh, the anguish! What will she offer if He comes—her old age, her ugliness, her nothingness?

The night was heavy with clouds—not a star, not a flicker of light anywhere. Can He see His way in the dark? Shavari brightened her lamp and opened her door with shriveled, fragile hands. The dauntless heart asks and asks, "Has the hour at last arrived? Is He near?"

. . . . .

So passed the years. And when nothing was left but a dim flicker of life, ready to be blown out by the wind of death, and when night and day, brightness and cold, watching and waiting, weeping and rejoicing, all retired to the bosom of Eternity, and when youth and beauty, strength and hope bade farewell, leaving Love alone in Her inner-

most chamber, He came, and those eyes saw Him, and closed, never to look again.

Now tell me, O Reader, was all beauty, all youth, all yearning, all love lost and wasted?

If thou art a lover, a seeker, a giver, thou wilt know the secret of my story.

THE DIVINE QUALITIES

From the teachings of Chuang Tzu

As Chun Mang was starting eastwards to the ocean, he fell in with Yuan Feng on the shore of the eastern sea.

"Whither bound?" cried the latter.

"I am going to the ocean," replied Chun Mang.

"What are you going to do there?" asked Yuan Feng.

"The ocean," said Chun Mang, "is a thing you cannot fill by pouring in, nor empty by taking out. I am simply on a trip."

"Tell me about the man of perfect virtue," said Yuan Feng.

"The man of perfect virtue," replied Chun Mang, "in repose has no thoughts, in action no anxiety. He recognizes no right, nor wrong, nor good, nor bad. Within the Four Seas, when all profit—that is his pleasure; when all share—that is his repose. Men cling to him as children who have lost their mothers; they rally round him as wayfarers who have missed their road. He has wealth and to spare, but he knows not whence it comes. He has food and drink more than sufficient, but knows not who provides it. Such is a man of virtue."

"And now," said Yuan Feng, "tell me about the divine man."

"The divine man," replied Chun Mang, "rides upon the glory of the sky where his form can no longer be discerned.

This is called absorption into light. He fulfils his destiny. He acts in accordance with his nature. He is at one with God and man. For him all affairs cease to exist, and all things revert to their original state. This is called envelopment in darkness."

FROM "THE MISTRESS OF VISION"

By Francis Thompson

Where is the land of Luthany,
Where is the tract of Elenore?
I am bound therefor.

"Pierce thy heart to find the key;
With thee take
Only what none else would keep;
Learn to dream when thou dost wake,
Learn to wake when thou dost sleep.
Learn to water joy with tears,
Learn from fears to vanquish fears;
To hope, for thou dar'st not despair,
Exult, for that thou dar'st not grieve;
Plough thou the rock until it bear;
Know, for thou else couldst not believe;
Lose, that the lost thou may'st receive;
Die, for none other way canst live.
When earth and heaven lay down their veil,
And that apocalypse turns thee pale;
When thy seeing blindeth thee
To what thy fellow-mortals see;
When their sight to thee is sightless;
Search no more—
Pass the gates of Luthany, tread the region Elenore."
Their living, death; their light, most lightless;

Where is the land of Luthany,
And where the region Elenore?
I do faint therefor.

"When to the new eyes of thee
All things by immortal power,
Near or far,
Hiddenly
To each other linked are,
That thou canst not stir a flower
Without troubling of a star. . . .
O seek no more!
Pass the gates of Luthany, tread the region Elenore."

HOLY NATIVITIES

III

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[The following account of the nativity of Sri Ramakrishna is of peculiar interest, inasmuch as it is the record of the birth of a modern Saviour, the echo of whose voice has barely yet died away. It is derived, and in part quoted, from "The Life of Sri Ramakrishna," a voluminous work containing the testimony of the actors in the drama—Khudiram, Chandra, their relatives and friends. Thus its "supernatural" elements cannot be laid at the door of legend and time. They were facts, which people still living today heard from the lips of those who experienced them—lips that were never stained by untruth. As such, they demand recognition.

It is significant to note how akin is this modern history, in some of its aspects, to the birth-stories of the more remote Teachers of mankind.]

A little over a hundred years ago—to be exact, in the year 1814—a man, his wife, a boy of ten, and a little girl of

four, with their few worldly possessions, wended their way in an ox-cart from Dereypore to Kamarpukur, both small villages in the great province of Bengal, India.

The man was Khudiram Chattopadhyaya or Chatterjee, who was facing a life of poverty and struggle in a new environment, having been unjustly despoiled of his ancestral home through the enmity of a zemindar or landlord whose anger he had incurred by refusing to give false witness against an unfortunate villager. Being, however, a man of noble character, possessed of all the qualities of a righteous Brahmin, as given in the Scriptures, and being devoutly religious, he accepted the situation as an inexplicable but beneficial dispensation of the Deity. Moreover, a friend had offered him in the village of Kamarpukur a few huts to live in, and a half acre of land called "Lakshmi Jala," or "Fortune's Meadow." Thither he was now bound with a heart more averse than ever to the hypocrisies of the world, and more than ever consecrated to the service of God.

During the years that followed, Khudiram gave himself with ever increasing devotion to a life of prayer and meditation. The villagers, finding in him a man of saintly character and highest attainments, had for him the most profound respect, which they held equally for his wife, Chandra Devi, who drew all to her by the loving kindness and unfailing compassion which flowed from her great mother heart. Never could she or her husband bear to refuse help to any living soul. There were times, however, when there was not enough food even to offer in the Shrine. Then Khudiram would say, "Never mind; if it be His will, we shall all fast together with the Lord." But food was never lacking for long. They lived simply and austerely, and their fertile half acre provided sustenance for them, and for those who came to their door.

It was in the year 1835 that Khudiram, moved by religious fervor, undertook a pilgrimage to Gaya—a place sacred to all Hindus—going the whole two hundred miles on foot, although he was now sixty years old. On reaching his destination, he went to the Shrine of Vishnu, sometimes called Gadadhar—the Second Person of the Hindu Trinity—and there offered oblations to his ancestors. The joy which he felt on that day was overwhelming. Unable to restrain his emotion, he wept profusely, and bowed down again and again, his heart full of humility and gratitude. "He then returned to his lodgings, the sacred memory of what he had felt being still with him.

"That night he had a strange dream. He felt himself transported again to the temple of Gadadhar, where, in the solemn silence of the sacred precincts, he found his forefathers feasting on the oblations with gladdened hearts. All of a sudden a divine effulgence filled the room, and the spirits of the departed reverently fell on their knees before a luminous Person seated on a throne. The divine Being beckoning him to His throne, Khudiram moved forward and, prostrating himself, praised the Deity with a devotional heart. The divine Being, addressing Khudiram in a sweet tone, said, 'I am well pleased at your sincere devotion. I am born again and again to chastise the wicked and protect the virtuous. This time I shall be born in your cottage and accept you as my father.'

"Khudiram was struck dumb with joy, and for a minute could not utter a word. Soon he recovered himself and said, 'No, my Lord, I am not fit for this favor. Thou hast already shown me more favor than I deserve. I am too poor to serve thee properly.'

"The Lord consoled him and assured him that he would never take offence at his shortcomings.

"Then the dream broke and Khudiram awoke from sleep, his heart thrilled with joy. He understood that a divine Being would bless his cottage, but he resolved not to speak about the dream to anyone without further corroboration. He returned home about the end of April.

"While Khudiram was at Gaya, Chandra Devi also saw strange visions. One night, she dreamt that a luminous person exactly resembling her husband was at her side. At first she thought it might be her husband, but such heavenly beauty was not possible to a human being. She awoke from sleep, but the vision still persisted. This made her think that some mischievous person might have broken into her room, and the sound of his footsteps might have caused this dream. She left her bed and lighted the lamp, but found the door bolted from inside as before. Her fears, however, did not subside, and she passed a sleepless night.

"Next morning she called two of her friends, Prasanna, the daughter of Dharmadas Laha, and Dhani, her neighbor of the blacksmith caste, and narrated to them the whole story. They laughed at her simplicity, and asked her not to repeat this absurd tale to anybody else. They assured her that it was nothing but a dream.

"Another day, when she was standing with Dhani before the Shiva temple adjacent to her house, she saw a flood of celestial light issue from the image of Lord Shiva and dart toward her. She was going to narrate this wonderful phenomenon to her friend when the light completely overpowered her and entered her body. She fell down senseless. Dhani nursed her back to consciousness and, hearing the whole story, was at first puzzled, and then took it as a nervous disease. But Chandra felt as if she were with child.

"The first thing that struck Khudiram on his return from

the pilgrimage was the changed conduct of his wife. Chandra Devi, always saintly, had been transformed, as it were, into a veritable goddess. Her heart was overflowing with kindness for every being, and she began to look upon her neighbors as her own kith and kin. She now considered it her paramount duty to attend to their wants and help them in all possible ways. In the midst of her own domestic preoccupations she often ran to their houses to see if they had their needs supplied, and if not, would give them privately from her own stores. Before taking her own dinner, she would inquire if any neighbors were without food, and, if that were the case, she gave her own meal to them, taking a little parched rice herself.

"This strange transformation in the character of Chandra surprised Khudiram, and he was rejoiced when his wife related to him her wonderful experiences. She further told him that she felt she was going to be a mother. Khudiram remembered his own visions at Gaya, and assured his wife that these things came to pass only through divine grace, and that he was sure that their humble cottage would soon be blessed by the birth of a divine child. He advised her not to divulge these visions to anybody. Chandra was greatly consoled by this assurance from her husband, and began to pass her days completely resigning herself to the will of the Lord. A few months passed, and it gradually came to be known among her friends that Chandra was again going to be a mother. Though she was now forty-five years old, yet her grace and loveliness increased a hundredfold, and her friends whispered among themselves that this conception at her advanced age might even prove fatal.

"The present members of the Chatterjee family relate that the prospective mother had now visions almost every day. Sometimes she felt the presence of celestial beings in

her own room. At other times she heard angelic voices. One day she awoke from sleep to hear the tinkling of bells from a child's anklets. At first she thought that a child had entered her room, but she saw no one, and the door was bolted from within. She often narrated her strange experiences to her husband, and told him that she had them not during prayer or meditation, but with her eyes wide open. She was worried for fear these might be due to some nervous disorder or to the intervention of ghosts, but Khudiram used to console her, saying that there was nothing wrong in them, and that they only foreshadowed a divine coming. Hearing this, Chandra's heart would be filled with great joy.

"The blessed hour for which Khudiram and Chandra were anxiously waiting at last drew near. On the morning of the 17th of February, in the year 1836, Chandra told her husband that the time of her delivery was approaching, and that she was unable to perform her household duties. There was no other woman in the family to do her work, and the food offerings for the Shrine had not yet been prepared. Khudiram, encouraging her, said that he firmly believed that a divine child was going to bless their home, and that this advent would not stand in the way of offering worship to the Lord. He asked her to go on with her work, promising her that he would make a new arrangement from the next day. Chandra picked up courage and with great energy performed the day's work. Dhani was engaged for the night. She and Chandra retired into one of the huts, while Khudiram and Ramkumar, the son, occupied the other. Besides these two huts, there were two more sheds on the premises; one was used as a kitchen, and the other contained a husking machine and an oven for boiling paddy. The latter was selected as the lying-in-room where the august stranger was to be born.

"The night had well nigh passed away when Chandra felt the time was at hand. With the help of Dhani she went to the appointed place, and at once gave birth to a boy. It was the vernal season, and nature had breathed new life into the world after the long winter. Birds with their sweet chirpings, and flowers with delicious perfume heralded the advent of the new prophet into the world, who, with infinite love in one hand, and infinite knowledge in the other, came to deliver his message of hope to suffering humanity, groaning under the weight of rampant materialism.

"After giving the necessary assistance to the mother, Dhani turned her attention to the babe, which, to her surprise, was not where she had placed it. It had slipped into the adjacent oven, and was lying there half-covered with ashes, without uttering a cry! She picked up the infant and was astonished to find that it was unusually large, like a child six months old. Some friends had already come to the cottage, and Dhani told them the glad tidings, whereupon there was great rejoicing. The peal of conch-shells announced the blessed event to the outside world. Khudiram, himself an adept in astrology, found that the infant was born at a most auspicious moment, promising a brilliant future. Celebrated astrologers also corroborated this fact, and prophesied a great and illustrious career. We cull the following extract from his horoscope, cast long after this event:

" 'This boy will be of a religious disposition, and respected by all. He will always be devoted to the performance of religious works. He will live in a temple, surrounded by many disciples. He will found a new religious order, and will be worshipped throughout the world as a great sage. He is born of the spirit of Lord Narayana.'

"The child was named Sambhu Chandra after the zodiacal sign at its birth, as is the usual custom among the Hindus. But Khudiram named him Gadadhar because of his wonderful experience at Gaya."

REPORT

On Tuesday, January 14th, Swami Paramananda conducted the Service at the Dedication of the new home for his work, at 745 West Adams Street, Los Angeles. Pictures, flickering vigil candles, and new bloom upon the mantel transformed the large living-room into a temporary chapel, at one corner of which stood the Swami's platform, commanding a view of the spacious entrance hall, and the library beyond. Pepper and eucalyptus boughs veiled every light, and their pungent odor mingling with the perfume of the incense, made the whole place fresh and fragrant. The house glowed its welcome, but nature had laid a very damp hand on the occasion, sending such a downpour that even the most optimistic predicted a small attendance. But by eight-thirty, motors were blocking traffic, and there was only standing room. Approximately three hundred people braved the storm to pay their tribute to Swami Paramananda and his new venture, and though over-crowded and uncomfortable, listened in absolute silence to his words of welcome and profound consecration.

In addition to the Ashrama musicians, Mme. Estelle Heartt Dreyfus sang "The Salutation of the Dawn."

During the remainder of the month, the Swami divided his time between the city house and the Ananda-Ashrama, giving Services in both places, and establishing at the Los Angeles Centre a regular Thursday evening dinner, modeled after the one which has proved so popular with the Boston members.

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston, during the Swami's absence, the work moved along in its regular rhythm, a good attendance being maintained in spite of a very severe winter.

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
Published Monthly except in August and September

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THE DAWN COMES

By Swami Paramananda

(From the Swami's new volume of poems, "My Creed.")

AFTER night of storm and strain,
The dawn comes, the dawn comes.
O dawn of splendor!
Dawn of glory!
Thou hast come, thou hast come!
How glad our heart,
How happy our mind,
How fresh our body,
How vibrant our life!
O dawn of splendor!
Dawn of glory!
Thou hast come, thou hast come!
I smile to think of all the worries,
All the gloom that hung,
All the fearful roaring winds,
And all the crashing sounds.
How ominous things looked!
Surely, thought I, the end is near.
All are gone now Thou art come.
O dawn of glory!
Dawn of splendor!
Thou art come, Thou art come!

THE ORIENTAL CHRIST

By Swami Paramananda

"If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

This command of Christ to His disciples has great significance for me, coming, as I do, from the Orient, where we are nurtured on the thought that no matter how lofty a man's prayers may be, it avails nothing if his life and instrumentality are not in tune with those ideals.

For this reason, let us all, as we begin our morning sermon, tune our thoughts and our prayers, our feelings and our aspirations, in such a way that there will be nothing which is not in accordance with the Christ Spirit, for only thus can we be worthy of that Spirit, worthy of God, and of humanity.

"The Oriental Christ"—this is the theme which I have chosen. The Eastern soul, no matter how abstract and exalted may be the views which it holds, primarily seeks that which is definite and practical. The idealism of the Orient always strives to make a living contact with human life. Unless we understand that, we shall never grasp the significance of the Christ Ideal.

Let me read you from a poem I have here before me, written by one who was not a professed Christian, but a great mystic soul of Persia—Jalal-ad-Din Rumi. He writes:

> In each human spirit is a Christ concealed,
> To be helped or hindered, to be hurt or healed;
> If from any soul you lift the veil
> You will find a Christ there hidden without fail.

This is in harmony with the idea that I am going to

present to you of a Christ that is universal; not the dogmatic Christ, not the Christ of creed, excluding a large portion of humanity, but that beneficent, that loving, that All-Blessed Spirit, hidden within every heart—the Spirit of Christ, the Redeemer. It is in this light that the Easterns see Him.

Dr. Minot Savage, one of the most eminent of Christians, and a man who longed to bring the living, glowing picture of Christ into the world of Christianity, said something which is so near to my conception that I am going to repeat it to you. These were his words:

"Shall we say, then, that there were no Christians before Christ, and that there are no Christians outside of what we call Christendom? Augustine was wiser than that. He refers somewhere to that which has always been in the world from the beginning, and which, in these latter days, we have come to call Christian. St. Augustine, the old Church Father and theologian, recognized that what we regarded as important and essential in Christianity was older than what had gone by that name. . . . The ideal man is the man who loves, and the man who knows how to apply his love power and impetus in such a way as to help, save, transform, develop, and glorify mankind . . . and I think the man who embodies these three things is a Christian, whatever he believes else."

In traveling through India, and over the vast area of this great country and of Europe, I have found that the true heart of humanity, the true code of Christianity, is everywhere the same—so tremendously the same that when this note is struck men respond in the one language of love, which is understood by all who have thinking minds and living hearts. That is why this morning I am going to emphasize not the dogmatic differences which exist in the world of religion, so much as the fundamental and un-

questionable unity that abides in the soul of man.

"Blessed are the peacemakers!" Not the peacemakers in Christendom only, but, blessed are all people who are peacemakers! "For they shall be called the children of God."

"Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid." Here is the picture I have learned to love—the picture of Jesus the Christ as He is conceived in the soul of the East. The Easterns see Him as a messenger of Light; they clothe Him in a robe of gentleness, with bearing majestic by divine right; they picture Him as the incarnate Spirit of love and divine loveliness—lowly of heart, mighty of spirit, Brother, Friend, and Saviour of man! How wonderful it would be for us to carry a picture like that in our heart, allowing it to inspire every part of our life and being, and to influence all that we think, and all that we strive to put into action in connection with our business and our dealings with humanity.

We never find the great spiritual Teachers coming with aggressive spirit to convert the world, but rather with a spirit which is full of healing. They do not seek to demolish or destroy; they live gently, and their appeal is lowly and tender. When people who are ignorant and of a corrupt nature oppose them, they do not fight them, they meet them with overwhelming greatness, sweetness, and unostentatiousness. They make these people realize how futile, how useless are their harsh feelings of aggression, how destructive to themselves; and so impressive is the living force of their life and character, that no man can resist.

At this point we may not agree. We turn and look at the picture of people on every side who seem almost impenetrable; we feel we cannot reach them through love. Christ found the same picture before Him and around Him, and if we study the real facts of His life and experience, we

shall find Him confronted with such difficulties that if he had yielded to unmanliness, weakness, and doubt, it would not have been surprising. But He came with a message; He came with faith and with hope unfailing; He could not yield to anything born of human weakness.

The man who has touched the heart of God has touched the universal heart. God's Spirit is cosmic, infinite; it is the common heritage of mankind. One becomes a good Christian not by clinging to a special creed, but by living. Living the life is the basis of all religions. It is what the Orientals understand. If I were to go to preach to a group of people in India, for instance, or if you were to go to them, with the exalted ideas and ideals of Christ, in an effort to convert them, the very first thing they would require of us would be this living quality; their first question would be in what measure we have reformed our own life, that is, how much the light—that wonderful, beneficent, healing light of Christ—shines through us. It is right that they should ask that question. How are we ever going to exemplify any ideal unless that ideal radiates from us? If a man should preach love, if he should quote beautiful sayings from the Christ and Christlike Spirits, and be himself unloving, there would be no import in his message. If there is anything that can throw doubt upon an ideal—making men feel that it is only an ideal and impossible to put into practice—it is this; and it is one of the greatest tragedies of modern life.

Today we are putting aside many great ideals—the ideal of faith, the ideal of love; overcoming our enemies through love; forgiving those who are treacherous toward us—qualities which Christ exemplified in His every day actions; and we are doing it because we imagine they are not practical, especially for this materialistic age. But the

world of living religion has never accepted any theory, no matter how exalted, unless it could be put into practice. St. Francis, who dedicated himself to the Christ ideal, transformed his life and even his countenance by constantly thinking of Him; and even today we have rare examples of people who believe with such conviction that they do not fear to put their ideal to the test. A person of this type may be laughed at; he may be called a visionary—one who tries to live to the very letter all that he reads in his Bible. Yet blessed is that man who fastens his whole heart to the Christ principle.

Would that all people could be converted to the lofty and beautiful teaching of the Christ of Nazareth, the Christ of the East—the lowly, the prayerful, devoted, yearning Christ, who seeks divine grace above all other things, and who shows man that his first and foremost duty is to find God, to live for God, to make God a living Presence in his life! Such a conversion would never mean a distinction between one group of men and another, but would include every one who loves God. Did not Christ give the injunction again and again that we should love God with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength? Did he not again and again admonish those who came seeking for wealth, success, and material advantage: "First seek ye the kingdom of God, all other things shall be added unto you?" Is this different in its essence from the ideals of other religions? No; it is a fundamental principle of religion itself. The differences we find are only on the surface—fictitious; yet we act as though they were real. Man calls God the Almighty Father, infinite in love and loveliness, and at the same time excludes someone merely because he does not accept his particular faith, treating him as if he were not a child of the same Father. It is not rational. We are thinking

human beings; we understand technically what it means when we say that we are included in the Infinite. We understand what it means when we say that God is the Father of us all. Then why does not that all-embracing Infinite include all?

Suppose someone strikes a discordant note through hatred and other un-Christlike qualities, is it not our duty to regard him as a sick brother? What do we do when we find that our younger brother has done something ignoble out of an impulse of anger? Do we not instinctively surround and protect him with our great tender feeling of love? Why should this not be so likewise in the world of religion, in the cosmic universe? It does not mean yielding when we find one who does not agree with us, whose standards are not the same as ours. Did Christ change His standard to suit the world? Rather He died to maintain it. He came to radiate Light, and that also is our privilege.

Whether we call ourselves Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, or by any other name, the mark of our religion is not in the creed that we profess, but in the universal love that we feel—the love that was in Christ, in the heart of Buddha, in the life of St. Francis, and which is the exalted Principle in the soul of man today. When that love becomes manifested through us, then are we ready to find our relationship with the Christ Spirit.

"In each human spirit is a Christ concealed
To be helped or hindered, to be hurt or healed."

Every time we hate, every time we show narrowness, bias, and unwisdom, we block the expression of that beneficent, that loving Christ which is within us.

"If from any soul you lift the veil,
You will find a Christ there hidden without fail."

If only we can lift that veil of ignorance, prejudice, harsh-

ness, and all such qualities, then will the Christ shine forth from the hiddenmost part of our being. Let us make this our ardent prayer.

We cannot convey a great deal by preaching, no matter how full of beautiful sentiment our words may be. We need to live the sermon, radiate the sermon, that in our dealings with humanity, even in a casual way, people may come to realize that our faith is living, that we are not merely clinging to some dogma, but that we believe in God above all things, and are making our life a constant consecration, an outpouring to Him. It does not matter what name we give that One. In a great Indo-Aryan Scripture there is a passage which says: God is One—only One. He is our Father, our Mother, our Guardian, our Friend and Companion; He knows our inmost prayer, even before we have uttered it. We are human beings, composed of elements, desires, attributes, some of which tend to make us long for spiritual experience. Without it, man is very incomplete. It is our greatest need. Therefore, let us learn to retire within at certain moments, in order to make our contact with the Supreme. And let it be a living contact, then all our small differences will vanish.

I feel like saying to you what the Jewish character in Lessing's drama said to the Christian when, surprised at the Jew's kindly act, he exclaimed, "Why, Nathan, you are a Christian!" And Nathan, the Jew, replied, "That which makes you feel that I am a Christian makes me realize that you are a Jew!"

There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, Hindu, Buddhist, Mohammedan. It is the same fundamental Spirit of God residing in all, and over all. When we realize that, we shall realize Christ—the Oriental Christ—who will rise like the sun, shedding His blessings upon the whole of

humanity, withholding His Light from none.

Let there, then, be peace within our soul, that we may carry that peace into the world, not in a passive, negative way, but as a living flame which will burn ignorance and prejudice from human hearts, and bring to them in return the great security that is found only in the arms of God.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

We know that we have passed from death into life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death. . . . My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth. —*St. John*

Real Christians are not those who profess, but those who possess Christ. —*Sadhu Sundar Singh*

Thine is the depth of the ocean. Thine are all human beings, all who breathe, all who bear a name and exist on the surface of the earth.

The whole of the four regions of the world, the archangels of the legions of heaven and earth, how many soever they be, these are Thine.

Thou art the Life-giver! Thou art the Saviour! The Merciful One among the gods! —*Accadian Prayer*

History warns us that it is the customary fate of new truths to begin as heresies and to end as superstitions.

—*Huxley*

I call that mind free which sets no bounds to its love, which is not imprisoned in itself or in a sect, which delights in virtue and sympathizes with suffering wherever they are seen, which conquers pride, anger, and sloth, and offers itself up a willing victim to the cause of humanity.

—*W. E. Channing*

If one is earnest and sincere, all religions can take him to God. —*Sri Ramakrishna*

DETACHMENT

By Sister Devamata

Western minds recoil automatically from the idea of detachment. They conceive it as a reluctant act of will, through which one is stripped bare and left naked, shorn of all that is dear and pleasant. This is a wholly erroneous conception. It is not a process of impoverishment, or a corrective for the love of acquisition; it is a method by which one acquires more wisely and more abundantly—the method which St. Paul presses upon his followers when he admonishes them to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

This brief admonition reveals the two fundamental practices incident to all development. They are discrimination and detachment—inseparable companions in the process of unfoldment. One represents the act of investigation, the other the act of choice. First scrutiny, then volition. The Katha-Upanishad describes it thus: "The good and the pleasant approach man; the wise examines both and discriminates between them; the wise prefers the good to the pleasant, but the foolish man chooses the pleasant through love of bodily pleasure." Both wise and foolish practise detachment; but the wise man detaches himself from that which has only fleeting value and hence cannot give lasting satisfaction, while the unthinking man detaches himself from things of vital importance and attaches himself to small secondary factors of experience.

We are doing likewise constantly. Not an hour of the day passes that we do not cheat ourselves of Reality and sell our heritage for a mess of pottage. Why is this? No man deprives himself of the good wilfully, or takes by preference a lesser good. When he does, it is because he believes the wrong thing to be good; that is, he makes his

act of choice without prefacing it by an act of discrimination. He does not examine the fruits of his course of action before he sets out to attain them. Goodness, beauty, enduring happiness, permanent advantage, these elements of life-expression do not need to be advertised with extraneous inducements. To see them in plain relief against the somberer background of humanity is to covet them. If man does not reach out for them, it is because he is looking somewhere else. He does not see them. Let him begin to cultivate the habit of discrimination and learn to scrutinize all things dispassionately before he closes his hand upon them and judicious detachment will take place of itself spontaneously.

A fundamental reason why our practice of detachment is so abortive and apparently fruitless lies in the fact that it is only partial. Our real desire is to detach ourselves from the unpleasant and hold fast to the pleasant. We wish to take one side of the coin and leave the other; but the moment we split a coin, we debase it and it has no further current value. In the same way we denature our experience and in place of accepting the full, rounded lessons life would give us, we ask for a diluted synthetic substance we label experience, for which we ourselves would provide a formula.

A great teacher in India was fond of telling this story: A man found a black scorpion in his blanket. The black scorpion is very poisonous and the man was much disturbed. He tried to shake it out, but it clung to the fuzzy surface and lifted its tail to sting. The man left the blanket spread on the ground, still the scorpion would not go. At last someone seeing his predicament, called out: "Why not throw away the blanket?" "Oh! I couldn't do that," was the man's quick reply. So with us, we wish to keep the blanket and get rid of the scorpion, yet we are unable to

separate them. The dualities which make creation possible and which form the basis of all sense perception are even more inseparable. They are but interchanging aspects of the same thing, sometimes appearing to us as pleasant, sometimes as unpleasant. If we would discard one aspect, we must discard both.

Detachment is a cosmic practice and lies at the base of all evolution. Without it there could not be any survival of the fittest, nor could the unfit be made fit to survive. It alone makes possible the sifting of the tares from the wheat. It means weeding out what is destructive or unproductive or what has lost its usefulness. The swelling seed-pod casts off its blossom petals, the tree casts off the ripened seed, the seed in turn breaks its sheathing. This is not, a mere negative procession of events. It has a lofty creative purpose.

Nature teaches a deeper lesson than that of negative detachment. For her, detachment is a mere by-product of a higher attachment. It has no causal value; it is only an effect—the automatic effect of fastening one's interest and desire to something more worth while; and that which is most worth while is that which is most permanent and enduring—the Ultimate. Life is a continuous chain of attachment and detachment, of grasping and letting go. But the process is of secondary importance in Nature's scale of values. The petals of the blossom drop off casually, the fruit in its turn falls naturally, leaves go and come—these passing facts concern Her little. Her concern is for the tree—to foster its life, to preserve its beauty, to increase its stature and strength. Falling leaves, decaying fruit, fading petals are all to enrich the soil around its roots; heat and cold are to keep its sap in circulation; rain and sunshine are to freshen and vitalize it. The tree is everything—the storm and sunshine that toss or brighten it are passing incidents.

The same is true of man. Pain and pleasure, honor and dishonor, victory and defeat, gain and loss, are but incidental factors in his upward course. Let him suffer or enjoy, let him gain or lose, let him fall or succeed, but let him be a *man*. Let him face the dual conditions of life bravely, knowing that if he tries to eliminate a single phase of experience, he will betray his manhood and cheat himself of a rare opportunity for growth. We are told in the Bhagavad-Gita that he who is not afflicted by these changing moods of life is fitted for immortality; in other words, he who can meet with lofty serenity and gladness of heart all that may befall him is fitted for higher and higher expressions of being. Therefore

Be not a coward,
Cringing before misfortune.
Live not a beggar of life
Nor shrink from defeat and death.
Though bleeding and sore-wounded,
Leave the battle-field triumphant
Like a brave warrior—
Perchance prisoner of pain
Or fast-fettered by failure
But a freeman in the heart.

Wind does not take the wheat, nor do stones overthrow the tree that has a solid root to hold it. It is the light straw the tempest tosses. —*St. Cyprian*

The early Romans built temples and offered sacrifices to the highest human excellences, to Valor, to Truth, to Good Faith, to Modesty, to Charity, to Concord. When all else has passed away, when theologies have yielded up their real meaning, and creeds and symbols have become transparent, it will be found that the virtues which the Romans made into gods, contain in them the essence of true religion.

—*J. A. Froude*

EASTER MORN

From "The Great Galilean" by Robert Keable

It was not later than five o'clock in the early hours of the morning. . . . The moon was in the zenith. She shone there, a scarcely diminished disc, so brightly that the palms about the fountain in the open patio still threw hard shadows on the white coral gravel. Over the great bay, two stars held dominion in the arc of sky, gleaming with that concentrated, intense radiance that is so different from the moonlight. . . . Right opposite, the mountains climbed gently but resolutely their five thousand feet into the night, and on their summits were lying great masses of clouds. To all appearance, the mountains might have been snow-capped, and in that event it would have been impossible to say where cloud began or snow ended. The air was clear and cool, yet not cold enough for me to be otherwise than refreshed as I stood there in my *pareu*.

Even as I watched, Easter Morning dawned. . . . To a symphony of white and black and gray and diamond, the painter, with one ineffable stroke of the brush, had added color—an edging so perfect that one hardly dared breathe. But it scarcely held for the time it takes to write of it. . . . Then, as if scarcely content with that miracle, there was in the firmament a multitude of the heavenly host. A thousand scarcely existent but rosy flecks of vapor carried the eye up to the central height, where the stars were withdrawing backward from the immanent Presence, and the moon blanched dead white.

The lagoon was now an immense palette, of color no longer needed and of color that was being rapidly taken from it with which to paint the sky. The unused fragments of a thousand sunrises, as the Polynesians say, were sinking in its depths. From its wide arms and from the distant

surf—by a trick of sound, silent, though pillars of water foamed thirty feet high again and again along it as if they leaped for joy—purple and green and blue and gold were being gathered to spread cloths before the coming of the King. Scarcely was one laid when another was flung upon it. It was an effortless prodigality that dumbfounded me where I, alone so far as I could tell in all that great bay, stood fast and unafraid to watch the resurrection.

Then, his countenance shining as the sun, he came, that mighty Presence, rising with so incredible a precision, so inviolate a right, sea and air and land were instantly transfigured. He reached out to touch the crimson and scarlet and salmon of the hibiscus flowers, new each morning, in the hedge before me; he drew out gently each white wing of the sleepy doves on the roof of the big bay window of the study; he penetrated the belt of verdure that stretched away on my right so that the green of cocoanut palm, pandanus, casuarina, tamanu, burau, mape, banana, papaia, was each distinct in its own glory as he had ordained. And the rushes by the river, the creeper on the ground, the coarse grass and the flags of wild ginger, lowly as they are, were not forgotten either. Nor did he leave me longer alone. He called to the fish, and they leaped from the sea; to the scarlet-breasted ricebirds, and a tiny flock flew chattering into the flowering tamanus; to the white tropic birds that rest in the great stark valleys behind my house, and they came swiftly to greet him. A single canoe shot out from the river's mouth, with a man in it, singing.

I turned toward the house, and saw Ilonka.

"Christ is risen!" I said.

"He is risen indeed!" she cried instantly, for she is orthodox. "Alleluia!"

Tahiti, 1927

THOUGHTS FROM THE SAMHITA

Rendered from the translation of Sri Ananda Acharya

The Sage Astavakra said:

Those who consider themselves liberated are liberated, as surely as those who think of themselves as bound, remain bound. As your desire is, so do you become.

You are a prisoner of the thought, "I am this personality!" the sword of knowledge can cut the knot of the snare. Know yourself as pure Spirit, and be happy, my child.

Do not make yourself the slave of any habit.

The pure, rational, beautiful, perfect, intangible, spotless Spirit cannot be known by those who are slaves of habit, and slow of soul.

You permeate this universe and the universe exists in you. You are in reality pure intuition. Do not be small-minded.

Life after life your affections cling to kingdoms, offspring, relations, bodies, and pleasures, though you are aware that they are transitory and mortal. Knowing that they are material and hence mutable, why cannot you rise above your affection for them?

The formless alone abides; names and forms pass away. They are unreal. This instruction is the true destroyer of the round of rebirth.

The high-souled person looks on his own body brimful of life as he would look on the body of another. As such, the praise or the blame of the world does not touch him.

He who realizes his identity with the Absolute, does what he knows, and is fearless.

Who can resist the mighty will of that noble-minded person, who, by understanding himself, understands the whole universe.

The pride of ego is bondage. Egolessness constitutes

liberation. Considering this, be at rest.

Your real Self is reflected in all that is perceived. Do gold bracelets and gold anklets seem different from gold? In the sense that gold is the cause of the bracelet, Self is the cause of the universe.

The wise man never comes to grief whether performing his tasks in the world or working out his liberation. Always he does his duty, and lives in happiness.

He who has listened to the Truth, whose vision has become clear, and mind independent . . . performs in a straightforward manner whatever duty demands. Like a child, he does all things in a playful spirit without any idea of agreeable or disagreeable results.

The wise man with unattached heart reveres the shining ones, respects the learned, is courteous to the king, greets the beloved, honors women, and visits holy places.

He who attains perfection, conquers. His soul is wedded to joy. His Samadhi(state of ecstasy)is spontaneous and continuous. He is a real Sannyasi(renouncer).

To the eye of the uninitiated public, the Yogi in whose soul the fire of wisdom has consumed the thirst for fame and achievement, is a toiling, busy man; but inwardly his soul is disconnected from the world of stir and sound. The light of his inner being is one with the Light Eternal. The world occupies his outer mind only. Thus fearless, he lives unaffected by darkness or evil.

The fearless soul of the liberated one does not place any reliance upon creeds and dogmas of the church—he lives in peace.

The quiet man is always contented. He wanders in different lands, and lays his head to rest anywhere, when the day star goes down.

THE MYSTERY OF THE CORN

A Zuni Indian Harvest Myth

(Adapted from Mr. Frank Cushing's account in the Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, Vol. XIII, and from Dr. William Norman Guthrie's paraphraze of the same article, in "Leaves of the Greater Bible," for October, 1917.)

PERSONS OF THE MYSTERY

Wouldst thou be instructed in this myth? Then look earnestly at the sacred corn plant. See how the stalks are jointed where they were grasped by two dancers, youth and maiden. See the long leaves from these joints, set spirally up the stalk. Behold the plume-like crest, resembling the plume of supplication offered to the gods.

Men used to feed on the seed of the wild grasses until it was changed to the food of our fathers through the coming of the People of the Seed, the Drinkers of the Dew of Grasses, elder brothers of men, who brought with them the knowledge of the mystery. The change was wrought through a dance performed by a youth of the kin of Water, goodly and perfect, and seven pure Maidens from the village of the Seed People, foster daughters of Paíyatuma, God of Dew, sisters of one another, virgins of one house, surpassingly beautiful, even as the seven bright stars clustered in the sky.

All through the night, backward and forward, danced the youth and the Maidens to the song line of the elders, in the plain where grew the grasses, motioning the growing plants upward with their magic wands and plumes, as we, with implements of husbandry, encourage the growth upward of the corn plants today. So also did they in turn embrace the plants with their own pure bodies; and where they had touched them most unitedly and warmly, lo! when the day dawned, on the stalks appeared new parts, showing

through their coverings many colorings, soft hair shrouding them, as if to make precious their beauty.

Yet would not this magic of the dance and of the Seed of seeds, blended with the medicine seeds of Soil and Rain—the heritage of the fathers—have been consummated save for the kindly help of Ténatsali of all-colored flowers, God of the Seasons; of Kwélele, God of Genial Heat; and of Paíyatuma, God of the glistening dew at dawn—he who by a wave of his flute calleth his foster daughters, the Corn Maidens, to follow him.

Now the Maidens were as yellow as flame, as blue as the smoke, as red as summer, as white as the milk, as black as the depth of gloom, and mottled as of all colors together. And at the call of the god Paíyatuma, and at the call of Ténatsali, and at the call of Kwélele, they filled the Seed with their own pure flesh, so that, of the two peoples now become one, the young men should wax strong, the maidens lovely to look upon, the mothers fruitful, the fathers wise.

Then Paíyatuma, even while the people stood wondering, spake in the full light of the rising sun:

"Lo! ye children of men, and of the Mother! Behold—rising from the grass-seeds ye planted in secret—the *seed plants of all seeds;* embued with the pure flesh of my own bright maidens! Look well that ye cherish their persons, lest their gift, consecrated to the feeding of men, be used for the bearing of children to men; and ye lose them, to seek them in vain!"

And as the people eagerly looked, the mists of the morning faded away, and with them, Paíyatuma.

THE MURMURING OF THE YOUNG MEN

Now all this was well and good, and for many generations the ever young Corn Maidens performed their holy rite. Yet a time came when there were those in the tribe

who grew weary of the custom, and complained that it was not as it had been of old. Furthermore, the young men who went forth, in quest of what they knew not, brought back tidings of strange sights and sounds. There was wonderful music, as of the echo of women's laughter, and the throbbing of deep-toned drums, which seemed to come from the very bowels of the Mountain of Thunder. And this music, they said, was far more beautiful than that of the Maidens in the Corn Dance.

The Fathers were troubled, and sought how they might allay these murmurings of their children against the precious Mothers of the Corn. "It is but the sounds of the wind," they said; but in their hearts they questioned, "May it not be the liquid notes of the flute of Paíyatuma, and of the flutes of his followers, and may it not be for us a sign?"

So, when the time of ripening corn was near, the Fathers ordered the performance of the yearly Dance, the *Hlahekwe,* and it was done, even in the same order as of old. And as the night fell, laden with offerings from the people, and whitened with the favor of their prayer-meal, the Master-Priest said: "Lo, now! as in ancient times, let a fire be kindled beyond the dancers. Mayhap, by its light, other singers and dancers will come, even Paíyatuma and his people, for the perfection of the corn." Then were sent forth two Priests of the Bow with instructions to go to the grotto under Thunder Mountain, seek out Paíyatuma, and implore the blessing of his presence, that the murmurings of the children might cease.

Along the trail by the river went the messengers, and as they approached the grotto, they knew by the sounds that came therefrom, and by the mists that enshrouded it, that Paíyatuma and his players were within. Reverently they entered, and repeated the request of the Fathers. Paíyatuma

listened courteously. "Ah, well!" he said, "thus ever is it with men—children truly! A thirst for what is not or what they have not. Yet it is well that ye come, and it shall be as ye wish. Go ye the way before, and straightway we will follow." Then, smilingly, he gave them his breath with his hands, and went forth; and with him went his other seven Maidens, Sisters of the Maidens of the Corn, of the House of Stars, fertile like them—not of the seed, but of the water of life wherewith the seed is quickened. Taller than any upon earth, and fairer, they bore lightly wands of cottonwood, from the buds and branches of which appeared faint wisps of mist, the seed of the rain. And they were attired in raiment as of rainbows, seen through the strange blue glamour of night, while above them sported the butterflies of Summerland. And lo! Paíyatuma took his place in the line of dancers, and breathed into his flute. Suddenly the drums rolled forth, and the flutes did sing and sigh as the white mists met and mingled over the ridged earth-bowl, filled with pollen-dust and honey, and holding the magic working substances of soil, water, and seed. Above, the seven stars shone down upon the upturned faces of the seven Maidens, as the awe-struck messengers went homeward, young in the joy of beholding, and old in the wisdom of the Vision.

THE SACRILEGE OF THE COVETOUS

Now, as the day broke in the village, faint far-off strains of music were heard, and the Fathers of the people, knowing that their prayer had been answered, arose to greet the God of the Dew, with outstretched hands filled with the corn-pollen and the holy prayer-meal, with thanksgiving that he should deign to come to them.

And, lo! the god drew nigh and blessed them; and with him were his Flute people and singers of the Flute dance,

who took their places, and sang their song of clear waters, beating on their drums and playing on their flutes, as the Dew Maidens moved through the first measures, while the people neither moved nor spoke.

Now, when the dance was ended, and Paíyatuma and the Maidens had retired into the bowers made for them, forth came the spotless, ever radiant Mothers of the Corn, who drew the eyes of the flute players by their beauty. Then the attendant youths of the tribe, those who assisted in the dance, grew covetous and impassioned, and, moved by jealousy, sought the presence of the Maidens, looking on them with such eyes of desire that fain were they to let fall their hair around them, and cast down their eyes. Yea, even did these froward youths pluck at their white garments, forgetting their chastity, and the ancient warning of Paíyatuma.

Meanwhile the people, bewitched by the new dance, observed this not. But as they watched the dancers, there arose from the terraced world-bowl a mist which gradually veiled the watchers and the dancers alike, shrouding the Maidens of the Corn, till they became invisible, and wandered unseen among the people. Sadly and noiselessly they laid their corn-wands down, passed the seed-corn over their own pure bodies, and laid it back upon the trays, covering it tenderly with their white broidered garments, as a mother would cover her babe. Then, as the mists increased, they drifted away to the south, the land of everlasting summer. But Paíyatuma, followed by his dancers, strode forth wordless from the midst of the people.

THE QUEST FOR THE MAIDENS

Now there was in the tribe great mourning and contrition. The Elders of the people went sorrowing, and said, "Herein have we all grievously sinned, for the sacred and

chaste Corn Maidens have gone, leaving us alone in the wilderness. If only once more we could look upon them, with solemn promise for the future! For without their sacred breath of blessing the corn-seed cannot flourish. Who shall seek them? Where shall we seek them, knowing not their trackless path?"

Then, at the bidding of the two master-priests, they went to the eagle—the eagle, keen of eye, swift of wing, white-crested. They told him of the loss of the Corn Maidens, and begged him to fly forth in search of them. "Yea, I will go!" said the eagle. But first he went with the priests unto the council and whiffed the smoke of peace. Then he flew far up and out, to the north, and south, and east, and west—far and wide he looked, yet naught he saw of the Holy Ones. Coming back, he snapped his beak and said to the Fathers, "Go ask my brother the Falcon, he flies nearer the ground than I." But the low-flying Falcon failed even as the far-seeing eagle had done.

"Be patient," said the Fathers. "There, by the edge of the town, is a raven, who can find seeds of corn even in the dirt and refuse. Surely, then, he will be able to find the Mothers of the Corn." But when they asked the raven, he was angered. "Here I am starving," he said, "because ye lick your bowls too clean; and yet you ask me to fly forth without food on a quest for you." However, they soothed him, asked him into the council, and gave him the pipe to smoke. But he, the greedy one, seeking to discover corn in the long stem, drew in such a whiff of smoke that ever since he and his kind have been watery of eye, and of blacker hue. Picking up a dried corn cob he flew out, crying, "Ye dolts, save by the help of the Father of Dawn Mist ye shall not see those whose flesh has become like the mist of dawn." The Fathers replied to one another, "Truly, that is so."

THE GOD OF DEW PITIETH HIS CHILDREN

And even as they spoke, came Paíyatuma, not radiant and kingly like the sun at its rising, but loud-voiced and uncouth, his voice filled with coarse jests and laughter. As they went forth to greet him, he sat him down on a heap of vile refuse, saying that he was about to make a festival thereon. And when the priests pleaded with him, he insulted them with perverse word and cruel. Then came Pekwina, Speaker of the Sun, who, all wise, knew the meaning of these lying speeches. And he went up to him, crossing as he went the wild turkey's wings in his hands, right over left, then left over right; and four times he stroked him up to bring him to his true being, and four times down to allay his godly wrath. And Paíyatuma arose, strong and straight and venerable, like a forest tree, in his true, beloved divinity. "Thanks be to thee, thou seer of the truth of things!" said he. "For by thy aid I have been able to spit forth the evil of the sons of thy people whose falsity I did take unto myself. And thanks be to ye, O ye Fathers, who have steadfastly kept straight your hearts. Because of ye I will have pity. Yet never again, year by year, shall the gracious Daughters of my House dance for you the holy dance of the Seed of seeds, lest your sons, repentant now, might once more grow covetous, and pollute even their virgin purity; yet, that ye may not perish in the wilderness, they will return to say farewell, and to endue your own pure daughters in their stead with the spell of the great Mystery."

With these words, he vanished, going forth to summon from the Summerland the beloved Corn Maidens, lost forever to the old fellowship of men.

FAREWELL OF THE CORN

Bearing his painted flute, he approached the home of his Daughters swiftly and all silently. But drawing nearer, he

put his flute to his lips and played, pausing as though to rest. And instantly, butterflies flew in a gay cloud about him, seeking the dew of his breathings therefrom, and birds shadowed him with their fluttering wings. Also came the Daughters, pure as the milk of the corn, joyous to see him. Greeting them with a loving touch of his hands and of the sacred Flute, he bade them follow him to the Northland home of the children of his people.

The moon was at its full when the Maidens appeared, bearing the trays of the Seed of seeds. How tall and stately stood Paíyatuma, in his undying beauty, banded with the mists of the morning, the wings of the wild turkey on either side, under his folded arms! How calm and lovely the holy Maidens, moving once again in their sacred Dance, their white robes woven of the clouds of the cottontree, broidered with flowers from their own Summerland! How harsh and forbidding, like the breath of frost, was Shutsuk'ya, the black being of the corn soot, who accompanied Paíyatuma like his shadow, and who cries with the voice of the frost-wind when the corn has grown aged, and the harvest is taken away. Then the Virgin of the North, the Virgin of the South, the Virgin of the East, the Virgin of the West, and the Virgins of the Nadir, the Zenith, and the Nether Gloom brought their trays of corn-yellow, red, white, blue, mottled, black, and many-colored—for Paíyatuma to breathe upon; after which, they gave, each unto the priest of her own region, as a final gift, the holy Seed of seeds.

Suddenly Shutsuk'ya whistled shrill four times, even as the wind of death, and all started and shuddered. Then there fell over that assemblage a moonless mist, and none dared breathe, nor see, nor hear, nor think till the mist lifted, and they found they were alone.

And so it has come about that ever since that time the

rite of the Corn Maidens hath been enacted by the maidens of the tribe, each one chosen to represent a Holy One and be the vessel of her virgin power; but chosen for one year only, that the people might remember their fault and its punishment. And, year by year, doth the youth of the Rain work with the maidens to evoke the spirit of the Seed of seeds, placing in it the very flesh of the Virgin Mothers.

And that Seed of seeds they bury deep as though it were the dead, and await its resurrection. And, lo! that resurrection cometh—manifold—up, up to the daylight of the Sun-Father, in sevenfold variety, like the colors of the rainbow!

Thus, in this way, did Paíyatuma bless the folk on that last night when he vanished forever, and was seen no more of men.

Who now can tell of the life-giving dance of the Corn Maidens, and of the youth of the Rain to the piping and waving of Paíyatuma's flute? Have you seen them pat and smooth the ground that the soil might be right-minded to the Seed of seeds lying beneath? Have you seen them charm upwards the little green fountains? Have you seen them stretch tenderly the stalk, grasping it gently as they circle about it, lifting it from knot to knot, denting it with their delicate thumbs as they hold it fast? Have you seen them lift the cresting plume at the top, the seed-spike waving in a prayer-plume to the zenith, quivering, delicate, full of the joy of light? Have you seen the Seed of seeds reborn for the food of men—the food of strength, the food of beauty—asking only the blessing of the Maidens to yield, in sevenfold variety—yellow, blue, red, white, streaked, black, many colored—the ever-renewed mystery of the corn?

Then are you blessed, for you know how holy is the bread which sustaineth man's life on earth.

THE DIVINE IMAGE

By William Blake

(An English mystical poet of the 18th Century)

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is God, our Father dear,
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
Is man, His child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity, a human face,
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine,
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

"Even if the most wicked worships Me with undivided devotion, he should be regarded as good, for he is rightly resolved. Very soon he becomes a righteous soul and attains to eternal peace. Know thou, O son of Kunti, that my devotee never perishes." —*Bhagavad-Gita*

BOOK REVIEWS

"MY CREED"

By Swami Paramananda

Many who write poetry care more for the art of writing than for the thought—the feeling—which is, or should be, the very foundation of the poem.

When Pegasus, at the stroke of his feet on the mountain, made the spirit of poetry to gush forth, that fountain did not need to be flavored by each human individual before he drank, or gave others to drink. If the truth is given clear from the fountain, the individual who hands the cup gives enough of his own, without personal effort toward his own peculiar flavor. Such effort mars the spirit of poetry, although it may seem to polish its art. This fact is equally true in all art—in painting, in music, in sculpture, in acting.

The great beauty in the poems of Swami Paramananda, especially in this last book "My Creed," is that the writer evidently thinks more, and values more, what he has to say than how he says it; and while in every verse there is the sign of the artist, there is, even more, a childlike sincerity which is the true beauty of poetry itself. To one who reads with the love of such sincere poetic feeling there is what could be called an alive spiritual satisfaction that grows in strength as one reads many of the same poems over and over.

We all know that there is a Creator—a God who is the Center of the Universe—the Center of all creation, spiritual and material. But who of us takes the trouble (and I say it without irreverence) to cultivate the friendship of that God; to stand by Him through thick and through thin; and to champion Him in every thought, word, and action of our daily lives. We all know, if we stop to think at all,

that we can not make our own eyes see, our own ears hear; we cannot rule any of the machinery of our souls or our bodies. We can only fulfil the conditions, and the Lord guides. As we fulfil the conditions rightly, our guidance is direct and full of life, toward all that is good in body and in soul. One of the best of the conditions to be fulfilled is to find a relation with God as we see Him. We have only human eyes with which to see Him, but as we are true to what we see we are gradually enlightened to see more.

Swami Paramananda in his poems reveals a real love for God and a true desire to serve Him, which gives every poem the beauty of a sincere ring. Anyone who loves the beauty of sincerity and wants to get a clearer sense of a possible nearness to the Divine can only be happily enlightened by reading the poems of "My Creed."

—*Annie Payson Call*

The author of these poems, the Swami Paramananda, founder of the Vedanta Centre in Boston, has spent some twenty-five years in America, lecturing, teaching, writing, in various cities. Consequently he has a large following that will read with interest this new product of his facile pen. The poems here are all short, and are, with few exceptions, the meditations of a mystic. Like the chapters of Thomas à Kempis, they breathe one single desire—absorption into the Universal Spirit. They are all characterized by the ecstasy of communion with divinity.

To Swami Paramananda, the one necessity of life is peace; the great futility, restlessness; the essential answer to the transcendent desires of the human heart, faith.

Only in simple faith did I find
A stillness,
A marvelous depth,
Where soul being drowned
Itself became mistress.

The outstanding evil of the age is selfishness—"the burning fever, consuming thirst of self-love, ambition, greed, envy, pride, and self-pity." To meet this, he begs for grace to "walk on the path of life without fear, doubt or thought of self." Life's frustration we encounter is due to blindness.

When Thou gavest me life
Thou gavest abundantly,
But alas, I make myself poor
With thought of lack.

One or two poems record a simple and almost objective love of nature, apart from any mystic interpretation of beauty.

The Spirit of Dawn raises the curtains of night,
With her gentle hand she bathes the face of the flowers with soft morning light.
She adorns them with beauty, breathing sweet perfume into their souls.
Behold how the faces of the flowers smile, expanded with life, love and joy.

The spirit of detachment from the material world finds high and poetic expression in these poems, which will bring moments of peace even to the unmystical striver for satisfaction in a world of action.

—*Boston Evening Transcript*

Never do great thoughts come to a man while he is discontented or fretful. There must be quiet in the temple of his soul before the windows of it will open for him to see out of them into the infinite. —*William Mountford.*

God never permitted any man to hold an ideal too beautiful for His power to make it practicable.

—*Wendell Phillips*

PRAYER FOR PEACE

By Aristophanes

O Thou that makest wars to cease in all the world, in accordance with Thine ancient name we beseech Thee, make war and tumult now to cease.

From the murmur and sublety of suspicion with which we vex one another give us rest. .Make a new beginning, and mingle again the kindred of the nations in the alchemy of Love, and with some finer essence of forbearance and forgiveness temper our mind!

REPORT

Sri Ramakrishna's birthday, falling this year on March 2nd, was celebrated on that day at Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, and on the following Sunday at the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Swami Paramananda being present on both occasions.

Following the tradition of India, where this event is marked by the laying aside of all differences of creed, caste, and nationality at the tremendous feast held for the public at the head monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission, at Belur on the Ganges, Swami Paramananda issued a general invitation to all who attended the Services to remain for a Hindu dinner, to be cooked by Srimati Gayatri Devi, and served in the patio of the Cloister. The response was warm and spontaneous. Fully five hundred people came throughout the day, and of these at least three hundred filled the Temple to overflowing at the eleven o'clock Service and were present at the repast. Between the morning and the afternoon Service, at the close of the dinner, accomplished Russian and Italian artists entertained the guests with an out-of-door concert, this being an offering of love.

The day, though slightly veiled with mist, was mild and

springlike, inviting the guests to wander in the gardens of the Ashrama, and up the picturesque canyons, where the wildflowers were coming into their first bloom. The peace that broods over the Ashrama hills is almost tangible, and on this day all minds and hearts were peculiarly open to receive it, after hearing the Swami's tender, lofty tribute to that cosmic, universal, all-loving Spirit whom men named Sri Ramakrishna—a Spirit for whom there were no boundary lines of race, religion or color. It was a day significant in the annals of the Vedanta work in America, and one long to be remembered.

Save for this occasion, the Swami's sojourn in California followed the usual routine of Services, Classes, and interviews, his time being divided between the Ashrama and the Los Angeles Centre.

In Boston, the Sri Ramakrishna birthday celebration drew a large attendance at all three Services, and was characterized by very special music, furnished by accomplished artists —devoted friends of the work—who always give of their talents unstintingly. The Thursday night dinner for that week corresponded to the noon-time dinner at the Ashrama, and reached the peak of enthusiasm and numbers. There was unanimous agreement that never in the history of the Boston work had there been so successful a dinner, one with a more joyous or inspiring atmosphere.

AN APOLOGY

We regret that, owing to a typographical omission, the article in the January "Message of the East," entitled "Holy Nativities," was attributed in whole to the Sister Nivedita, whereas the Sister's part, taken from her "Cradle Tales of Hinduism," began only at the second paragraph. The first and last paragraphs were in the nature of editorial additions.

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
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A RULE FOR MANKIND

From the Epistles of Seneca

WE are mad, not only individually, but nationally. We check manslaughter and isolated murders; but what of war and the much-vaunted crime of slaughtering whole peoples? There are no limits to our greed, none to our cruelty.

As long as such crimes are committed by stealth and by individuals, they are less harmful and less portentous; but cruelties are practised in accordance with acts of senate and popular assembly, and the public is bidden to do what is forbidden to the individual.

Deeds that would be punished with loss of life when committed in secret, are praised by us because uniformed generals have carried them out. Man, naturally the gentlest class of being, is not ashamed to revel in the blood of others, to wage war.

I can lay down for mankind a rule, in short compass, for our duties in human relationship: all that you behold, that which comprises both God and man, is one; we are parts of one great body. Nature produced us related to one another, since she created us from the same source to the same end.

She engendered in us mutual affection, and made us prone to friendships. She established fairness and justice. Ac-

cording to her ruling, it is more wretched to commit than to suffer injury. Through her orders, our hands are ready to help in the good work.

Let this verse be in your heart and on your lips:

I am a man; and nothing in man's lot do I deem foreign to me.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart;
Prove me and examine my thoughts.
Look well if there be any way of sorrow in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting. —*Psalms*

Every right action and true thought sets the seal of its beauty on person and face. —*John Ruskin*

Try to see where you are wrong rather than to point out with insistence where you are right. The right will care for itself, but God cannot send the light of unselfish love into a heart that is filled with the desire to protect itself from having its mistakes shown up. That is against His law. Therefore we must see our selfishness in detail and refuse to act, to speak, or to think from it, in order to get more light, and more strength. How curious it would seem if a friend told you that you had a smooch on your cheek, and you refused to look at that cheek, but busied yourself to prove how *clean* the other cheek was! —*Annie Payson Call*

Thou must be like a promontory of the sea, against which though the waves beat continually, yet it both itself stands, and about it are those swelling waves stilled and quieted.
—*Marcus Aurelius*

These, the senses and the mind, are what Heaven has given to us. Let a man stand fast in his nobler part, and the inferior part will not be able to take it from him. It is simply this which makes the great man. —*Lao Tzu*

WATCHING OUR THOUGHTS

Class Lecture by Swami Paramananda

(Based on the Buddhist Scripture, the "Dhammapada.")

Thought is the most fundamental thing in life. We need to watch our thought. It is a good custom occasionally to make a break in our routine of duties, and through prayer and meditation detach ourselves from them. Sometimes we have to stand aside from ourselves and look upon our work as a witness.

In India, they have always had a definite custom of praying at least three times a day—the beginning of the day, the mid-day, and the end of the day. Let me give you my idea of what it signifies: The morning hour ever brings a sense of newness, of freshness—the darkness ending and the light beginning. Then, when we come to a point where the day is divided—what we call mid-day—that is another psychological moment for us to make a break in our thought, in our round of activities. And, finally, at the evening hour when the day ends and the night comes, Nature provides a spirit of calmness, a sense of union. Or we can take it in a picturesque way as day and night greeting each other—action and inaction—the hour of duty and the hour of reflection coming together to verify whether our life has been properly used throughout the day. We cannot persist in this practice without gaining a truer vision. Now, we are very quick to recognize any disturbing element which comes from the outside. If someone speaks unkindly to us, or does not agree with us, or some other unpleasant condition arises, we blame all our disturbed feelings on that person or condition, and we fail to see that there may be another reason for our trouble. Herein lies the difference between the wise man and the man of ordinary mentality. The average person always finds fault with his setting, his surroundings, the peo-

ple he contacts, that is, with everything pertaining to the exterior. There, he thinks, lie the real causes for his misery. But the wise man does not try to find these outer reasons; in fact, he does not give any recognition to the external. He says, "If I am fundamentally right, if I am strong, there is nothing that can overthrow me." Therefore he strives to make his thought steady and constant.

"As a fletcher makes straight his arrow, a wise man makes straight his trembling and unsteady thought, which is difficult to guard, difficult to hold back." This is the teaching of the Buddha, the Compassionate One, the great illumined teacher, and it is very practical teaching. Again he tells us:

"As a fish taken from its watery home and thrown on the dry ground, our thought trembles all over in order to escape the dominion of Mara, the tempter."

Why does thought tremble? Why does a leaf on the tree tremble, as it were, when there is a gust of wind? Same way, our mind trembles if there is a gust of anger, passion, or any sort of emotion that is of evil origin.

It is an interesting fact that throughout spiritual history the great teachers, those who are really enlightened and illumined, have given their teaching in the form of pictures and parables. No matter what intellect we may possess, we cannot grasp abstract truths until we have realized them in our life and consciousness. To Christ, Buddha, and the sages of all countries and all ages, however, these truths were not any more a question of speculation; they perceived them as definite pictures, and gave those pictures to us in parables that we might retain them and benefit by them. "As a fletcher makes straight his arrow," same way, "a wise man makes straight his trembling and unsteady thought." What other formula do we need?

We are always complaining that we do not have enough

practical teaching; we want to be told to do this and to do that, and all the time what we really want is something mysterious, that requires no effort on our part. But will this give us strength? A teacher who is helping his pupils to build up their muscles does not ask them merely to read over a set of rules, he makes them do the exercises, for only in that way will their muscles be developed. Practical teaching is that which we apply and try out in our life; it is that which increases our strength, and gives us vision. Here again, the Lord Buddha tells his disciples:

"It is good to tame the mind, which is difficult to hold in and flighty, rushing wherever it listeth; a tamed mind brings happiness."

How often we say, "My mind is restless; it would be impossible for me to make it steady." It is not impossible, but we have formed the habit of thinking that it is, and so we keep on suffering. When the mind is agitated, when it is in a fever of longing, or in any sort of disorder, it always suffers, no matter what the apparent cause may be.

"Let the wise man guard his thoughts, for they are difficult to perceive, very artful, and they rush wherever they list: thoughts well guarded bring happiness.

"Those who bridle their mind which travels far, moves about alone, is without a body, and hides in the chamber of the heart, will be free from the bonds of Mara, the tempter."

These words contain a whole volume of truth—truth that we can apply in every turn of life. The "Chamber of the Heart!" or, as it is called in the Vedic reflection, the Upanishads, the "Cave of the Heart!" This is a very interesting conception, which we are apt altogether to overlook. Whenever we are troubled, whenever we are haunted, as it were, by life and life's troubles, we try to run away;

we seek to escape our miseries by shifting our ground. We can never escape that way, however; the same mind goes with us, and very soon we create the old conditions. You can study this and verify it for yourselves.

Bridling the mind is also an interesting conception. When we bridle a horse, we keep it under control. One who does not know anything about driving lets his horse take him where it will, and sometimes it takes him to his ruin. Same way it is with us. We talk of freedom—often in an impulsive way—and we do not like any one to interfere with us. But who is there who can interfere with us? Here is something we do not want to recognize—a fundamental fact. We may give to ourselves, and may give to others, thousands of reasons for our impatience, for our misbehaviour, for our anger, and though they are, perhaps, good reasons, they will be harmful to us. When we remain steady, when we are unmoved, when we are unconquered by these evil emotions, we find our greatest mood. The conquest we make over ourselves, and over all the elements that are detrimental to us, is the real conquest. There lies the discipline of life.

From fifty to ninety percent of our troubles are purely mental. You do not have to take my word for this; even physicians are coming to the conclusion that until the mind can be reached, a person cannot be helped. A surgeon may perform a very difficult operation, but no surgeon, no spiritual teacher, not even Christ and Buddha, can heal or redeem a man so long as he is holding himself tight—shutting everything up within himself. We are apt to hide our troubles and our mistakes in this way. Of course it is a play of ego: we do not want others to know; yet herein lies the opportunity for a beautiful practice in truth. If we can tell the truth, think of it, contemplate it, speak of it, even though it may

sometimes humiliate us, our whole nature will be clarified. It requires courage and strength to do this, but through it a man becomes triumphant. First of all, we have to learn to tell the truth to ourselves. It may be very difficult for us to go and reveal our faults to someone else, and often it does not seem to help—one blind person cannot lead another—but we can express to our own soul. In the "Book of Daily Thoughts and Prayers" there is this sentence: "Do not let us play false with ourselves." The whole of the Book of Life is written here. It is not only Shakespeare who conceived this thought; it is not your idea or mine; it is the idea of everyone who is thinking in the right way. Until we can hold our face before the mirror and not be horrified by our expression, life will not be safe for us. You may hide your face from others, but you cannot hide it from yourself. If a person has an ugly thought, the ugly expression will come to the surface. If he dwells in bitterness, his countenance will show that bitterness. Hatred, jealousy, all such qualities sooner or later will manifest, no matter how we may try to hide them. Therefore, wise men tell us that instead of blaming outer conditions, or merely seeking to shift our ground, we should find something permanent. That means the indrawn life—retreating to the centre of one's own being, the cave of the heart. It is the only safe place for us. When we gain access to it, we know a seclusion, a protection, a peace which nothing can mar. Now, when our mind is confused, we run to this person and that person, with the result that we grow more and more bewildered; but when we have found this innermost realm, we cease to complain. In strain, struggle, or storm, we seek not mere human advice and shelter; we go there—within.

Thus we see that what the Buddha gives us is not only of the province of high wisdom, it is practical wisdom as

well. In the world of thought we need it, and in the world of action. As a matter of fact, there is no difference between them: a person who is true on one plane is true on another. Truth is Truth; it is self-evident, self-effulgent.

We all want wisdom; but there are certain requirements. A man labors in his garden, waters there many hours, and then becomes angry because there is no result. If there is no result, there is some reason for it. Perhaps the water is not reaching the roots of the trees; it is going elsewhere. Same way it is with us: we keep open in ourselves avenues through which there is constant wastefulness, and then we grow impatient; we denounce ourselves, and we denounce others.

These are purely practical teachings. No matter wherefrom they come, you can take them on their face valuation. If you apply them, you will become your own Saviour, so to speak; you will need no other. I am not saying this in any arrogant way. You have the saving grace with you, and in you; it cannot be withdrawn from you; nobody can ever take away grace from a person who has conquered the evil of egotism. You cannot quarrel with one who is not egotistic. You can never make him unhappy, and no unhappiness can come to you from him.

"If a man's faith is unsteady, if he does not know the true law, if his peace of mind is troubled, his knowledge will never be perfect." Faith is a very wonderful factor in human existence. Without it, what can we do? If we have no faith in life, we cannot make our life constant. If we have no faith in ourselves, we shall not be able to accomplish anything. If we have no faith in others, how can others have faith in us? If we have no faith in Divinity, our prayers will be of no avail, and certainly we cannot infuse faith into our children. Here is one of the greatest questions of the day. There are many parents who do not

feel the need of religion, yet they feel that even from a social point of view their children should have a certain amount of religious training. That is not fair. We should not impose on our children, or on our friends, something that we do not believe in. The only thing we can give them is what we share with them—the fruit of our own life. That which Lord Buddha gave his followers was not merely what he had worked out intellectually, but what had come to him through his life, as fruition. And I think that some day, as we grow deeper in our understanding of human nature, and of our destiny, we shall reach the same conclusion as have the Indo-Aryans—that, after all, it is not the oral teaching, it is not the written teaching, through which the greatest good comes to us, it is the example, the life, the contact with life.

True wisdom is just like a blazing fire, like a flaming torch. When a man carries it, others kindle their torches from it. In this way the light goes on spreading till finally the darkness of the world begins to diminish. Speech is not necessary. In India, there are those whom we call Munis—men who teach in silence. They do not have to use words; their life and example constantly convey their message. Even here in the Occident, there comes a time with most men when they long for quiet. It is an interesting fact that one of my little books, "Creative Power of Silence," has seemed particularly to attract those from whom I did not expect any response. Business men invariably choose it, as well as people who have no special spiritual inclination. This shows the innate craving of the soul. We are all longing for that inner chamber of the Buddha, the mystic's conception of the cave of the heart—the hiddenmost—contained in our being of beings. For to reach that is to gain understanding, and to know a peace that cannot be

broken by any human turbulence.

How is it with us now? We disagree with someone; for hours we argue; we flash forth what we think is our intellectual brilliancy, and we find that it has accomplished nothing whatsoever: even greater turmoil has come upon us. That is why, after a life-long experience, we follow the simple teaching; we learn to value the direct path. We realize the folly of our aggressiveness and egotism, and know real poise, tranquillity, and calm.

We are indeed blessed, and the world is blessed with us, when we do not disturb others, even by our thought. Once we learn to make our thoughts straight and our mind steady, which at present is unsteady, there will not be a moment in our life which is unfruitful. A steady mind is always an ordered mind, a mind which is full of power, peace, dignity, and spiritual significance. No one can come in contact with such a mind without gaining fresh impetus. This is a fundamental principle. It has nothing to do with dogma, creed, or belief. If the mind is stable, strong, and unshakable in faith, then, with that mind, we can work our own good, and become a great factor in bringing good to our fellow men, even in silence. We attain to this, however, only through constant practice. Out of all the hours of the day can we not put aside a little time for prayer, meditation, and study? As I urged in the beginning, let us give ourselves a chance, and sometimes break the routine of our life and consciouness. Let us gather up all our thoughts and make them direct, straight, and unwavering, that we may learn to take the essence of truth, and fortify ourselves against the ills of existence.

Let us make our appeal to the Infinite, and take up our position there. —*Lao Tzu*

TRUE SOLITUDE

By Michael de Molinos

Know, that although exterior solitude doth much assist for the obtaining internal peace, yet the Lord did not mean this, when He spake by His prophet(Hos. 11. 14)—I *will bring her into solitude, and speak privately to her*—but He meant the interior solitude, which jointly conduces to the obtaining the *precious jewel* of peace internal. Internal solitude consists in the forgetting of the creatures, in disengaging one's self from them, in a perfect nakedness of all the affections, desires, thoughts, and one's own will. This is the true solitude, where the soul reposes with a sweet and inward serenity in the arms of its chiefest good.

Oh, what infinite room is there in a soul that is arrived at this Divine solitude! Oh, what inward, what retired, what secret, what spacious, what vast distances are there within a happy soul that is once come to be truly solitary! There the Lord converses and communicates Himself inwardly with the soul; there He fills it with Himself, because it is empty; clothes it with light and with His love, because it is naked; lifts it up, because it is low; and unites it with Himself, and transforms it, because it is alone. *O delightful solitude and cipher of eternal blessings! O mirror, in which the Eternal Father is always beheld! There is great reason to call thee solitude; for thou art so much alone that there is scarce a soul that looks after thee, that loves and knows thee. O Divine Lord! How is it that souls do not go from earth to this glory? How come they to lose so great a good, through the only love and desire of created things? Blessed soul, how happy wilt thou be if thou dost but leave all for God! Seek Him only, breathe after none but Him; let Him only have thy sighs. Desire nothing, and then nothing can trouble thee; and if thou dost desire any*

good, how spiritual soever it be, let it be in such a manner that thou mayest not be disquieted if thou miss it.

If, with this liberty, thou wilt give thy soul to God, taken off from the world, free and alone, thou wilt be the happiest creature upon earth, because the Most High has His secret habitation in this holy solitude. In this desert and paradise is enjoyed the conversation of God; and it is only in this internal retirement that that marvelous, powerful, and Divine voice is heard.

If thou wouldst enter into this heaven of earth, forget every care and every thought; get out of thyself, that the love of God may live in thy soul.

Live as much as ever thou canst abstracted from the creatures, dedicate thyself wholly to thy Creator, and offer thyself in sacrifice with peace and quietness of spirit. Know that the more the soul disrobes itself, the more way it makes into this interior solitude, and becomes clothed with God; and the more lonesome and empty of itself the soul gets to be, the more the Divine Spirit fills it.

There is not a more blessed life than a solitary one; because in this happy life God gives Himself all to the creature, and the creature all to God, by an intimate and sweet union and love. Oh, how few are there that come to relish this true solitude!

To make the soul truly solitary, it ought to forget all the creatures, and even itself; otherwise it will never be able to make any near approach to God. Many men leave and forsake all things, but they do not leave their own liking, their own will, and themselves; and therefore these truly solitary ones are so few. Wherefore, if the soul does not get off from its own appetite and desire, from its own will, from spiritual gifts, and from repose even in the Spirit itself, it never can arrive at this high felicity of internal solitude.

Go on, blessed soul! Go on, without stop, towards this blessedness of internal solitude. See how God calls thee to enter into thy inward centre, where He will renew thee, change thee, fill thee, clothe thee, and show thee a new and heavenly kingdom, full of joy, peace, content, and serenity.

CLOSED EYES THAT SEE

By Marion Craig Wentworth

In a tea garden,
Hidden in the foliage of a by-path,
I came upon an old stone image
Of the Buddha.
Grey and streaked with many rains,
His strange ecstatic smile
Unmarred by age or weather,
Still he sits, legs crossed, hands folded,
Entranced with vision.
I stood and gazed—
Gazed until I felt his smile
Delicately touch my lips.
Before that face my own grew calm.

(Humming birds gaily dipped and flashed
About the dripping water pails suspended in the green.)

Still I gazed—asking—seeking!
Closed stone eyes!
They see not—yet they see!
Not me—not this little self,
Nor the world,
Nor anything in time and space—
Some Radiance, Essence, Bliss of Knowledge
Not known to mortals of the earth.

Closed stone eyes—open!
Reveal your vision!

(The water drips; rays of color dart and shimmer,
The green solitude deepens to a singing silence.)

Slowly my eyelids fall.
I pass the portals,
Follow Thy sight—O grey stone Buddha!

The clashing world I know recedes,
A speck of dark in a sea of glory.
It is the very Cosmos,
The Flame of Wisdom, the secret of creation,
The outbreathing of the mighty Brahm Himself!

(Humming birds and I, tiny leaves and pearly drops
of water
Are flecks in the Flame, partakers of the Breath Itself.)

"I AM" throbs through the ends of Being,
An ocean of Light enfolding all of life,
I hear the cello notes of violets pushing through the sod,
The choral hymn of the rising sun,
The paean of the spinning stars,
All is God—and God is Bliss. "OM, OM, HARI OM."

Closed stone eyes,
Open gateways to a universe of Love,
Infinitude of Peace! "OM, OM, HARI OM."

The weakest creature by concentrating his powers on a single object can accomplish something; whereas the strongest, by dispersing his over many, may fail to accomplish anything. —*Carlyle.*

VIGNETTES OF INDIA

By Nicholas Roerich

(Nicholas Roerich, artist, writer, prophet of the Spirit, and pioneer of beauty, is one of the dominant figures in the art-world of today. With his dream of uniting mankind through their common love for the beautiful, he has ventured into far fields, trailing clouds of glory in the form of wonderful paintings, depicting the very essence of the people and places visited. His last quest, begun May 8th, 1923, took him into the far, mysterious regions of Himalaya, whence he returned some years later with a wealth of experience, recorded in word and color.

The following extract is from the verbal record, appearing in book-form under the title of "Altai-Himalaya," and published by Frederick A. Stokes Company, New York.)

Is it really India? A thin shore line. Meager little trees. Crevices of dessicated soil. So does India hide its face from the south.

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Multicolored is Madura with the remains of Dravidian strata. All the life, all the nerve of the exchange, was near the temple. In the passages of the temple are the bazaar, the court, the sermon, the reciter of the Ramayana, the gossip, and the sacred elephant who wanders in freedom; and the camels of the religious processions. The ingenious stone carving of the temple is colored with the present-day crude colors.

Sarma, the artist, sorrows over it. But the city council did not listen to him, and colored the temple according to their own plan. Sarma is saddened that so much of fine understanding is gone, and has as yet been replaced only by indifference. . . .

Sarma inquires about the condition of artists in Europe and America. He is genuinely surprised that the artists of Europe and America can live by the labor of their hands. It is incomprehensible to him that art can provide a means of livelihood. With them, the occupation of artist is the most

profitless one. There are almost no collectors. Sarma himself, tall, in white garments, with sad, calm speech, awaits something better, and knows all the burden of the present. . . . Hard is the life of the Hindu artist. Much resolution is needed in order not to abandon this thorny path. Greetings to the artists of India! Why is it that in all countries of the world the condition of scientists and artists is so precarious?

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Thorny also is the way of the Hindu scientists. Here, before us, is an example, in a struggling young scientist, a biologist and pupil of Sir Jagadis Bose. He began his laboratory in the name of Vivekananda. In his peaceful little house above the laboratory is a room dedicated to the relics of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, and other teachers of this group. This young man, pupil of the closest pupil of Vivekananda, carries into life the principles of this master, who fearlessly proclaimed his evocation to action and knowledge. In this little top chamber he formulates his thoughts, surrounded by the things which belonged to his beloved leaders. One remembers vividly the portraits of Ramakrishna and his wife. Both faces impress one with their purity and striving. We sat in complete silence near this memorial hearth. Greetings!

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Who can explain why the path of knowledge and beauty is the most difficult? Why does humanity accept with such hesitation all that is predestined? It is therefore the greater joy to see in India the signs of an ascent of knowledge and art. It is joyful to see that in India the number of schools is increasing, and that legions of new enlightened workers for science and beauty are ready to serve in the victory of evolution.

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In Calcutta, not far behind the city, are two monuments to Ramakrishna. On the shore, Dakshineswar, the Temple, where long lived Ramakrishna. Almost opposite, across the river, is the Mission of Ramakrishna, the mausoleum of the teacher himself, of his wife, of Vivekananda, and a collection of many memorable objects. Vivekananda dreamt that here should be a real Hindu University. Vivekananda took care of this place. There is a great peace here and it is with difficulty one realizes oneself so near to Calcutta with all the terror of its bazaars and confusion. . . .

On the memorable day of Ramakrishna as many as half a million of his admirers gather.

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On the shores of the Ganges, a grey-bearded man, cupping his palms like a chalice, offers his entire possessions to the rising sun. A woman quickly telling her rhythms performs her morning *Pranayama* on the shore. In the evening she may again be there, sending upon the stream of the sacred river a garland of lights as prayers for the welfare of her children. And these fireflies of the woman's soul, prayer-inspired, travel long upon the dark watery surface. Beholding these offerings of the Spirit, one can even forget the stout priests of the golden temples. We are minded of other things. We recall those Yogis who send into space their thoughts, thus constructing the coming evolution. Not the usual priests these, but active hermits; they are bringing our thought near to the energy which will be revealed by scientists in the very near future. . . .

Everywhere, much incense, rose water, and fragrant sandalwood. Hence the smoke from the bodies in the Burning Ghats of Benares is not turbid. And in Tibet, also, cremation is used.

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Regard the gentle child games of the Orient—and listen to the complicated rhythms of the chants and soft music. There are not evident the profanities of the West.

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Each day a woman's hand molds the sand at the entrance of the house into a special design. This is the symbol that within the house all is well, and there is neither sickness, death nor discord. If there be no happiness in the house then the hand of the woman becomes stilled. A seeming shield of beauty is placed before the house by the hand of the woman at the benevolent hour. And little girls at school early are being taught a variety of designs for the signs of happiness. An inexplicable beauty lives in this custom of India.

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Vivekananda called the women of India to work and to freedom. He also asked the so-called Christians, "If you so love the teaching of Jesus why do you not follow it?" So spoke the pupil of Ramakrishna who passed through the substance of all teachings and learned through life "not to deny." Vivekananda was not merely an industrious "Swami"—something lion-like rings in his letters. How he is needed now!

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"Buddhism is the most scientific and most coöperative teaching," says the Hindu biologist, Bose. It is a joy to hear how this truly great savant who found his way to the mysteries of plant life speaks about the Vedanta, Mahabharata, and about the poetry of the legends of the Himalaya. Only true knowledge can find the merited place for all existing things. . . .

Bose's mother in her day sold all her jewels in order to give her son an education. The scientist, in demonstrating "His kingdom," says: "Here are the children of the rich in

luxurious conditions. See how they become puffed and baggy. They need a good storm to bring them back to healthy normalcy." Knowing the pulse of the plant world, the scientist approaches wholesomely all the manifestations of life. . . . One of Bose's best books was written on the heights of the Punjab in Mayavati—in the shrine of Vivekananda. Vivekananda departed too soon. Bose and Tagore—noble images of India!

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Some of the most cosmogonic parts of the Vedas are written by women, and now in India has arrived the epoch of the woman. Greetings to the women of India!

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Ramakrishna says: "In Atman there is no distinction of male or female, of Brahmin or Kshatrya and the like."

Ramakrishna executed the work of the sweeper to show, personally, that there were no distinctions.

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Sir Jagadis Bose affirms that the sensitiveness of plants is completely astonishing. As the plants feel the formation of a cloud long before it is visible to the eye, so the East feels the thought at its inception.

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In the close interrelation between the visible and the invisible, and in the epic simplicity of their interplay, lies the charm of India.

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In sudden support of fundamental Buddhism, the realist of realists, Huxley, says, "No one but a superficial thinker rejects the teaching of reincarnation as nonsense. Like the teaching of evolution itself, reincarnation has its roots in the world of reality and is entitled to the same support commanded by every consideration which evolves from analogies." . . . . . .

L. Horn writes: "With the acceptance of the teachings

of evolution, the old forms of thought everywhere are crumbling. New ideas arise in the place of outlived dogmas, and we have before us the spectacle of a general intellectual movement in a direction becoming ever more strange, parallel with Eastern philosophy.

"The unheard of speed and variety of the scientific progress current in the last fifty years cannot but call forth an equally unprecedented hastening of thought in the broad non-scientific circles of society. That the highest and most complete organisms develop out of the simplest organisms; that upon one physical basis of life stands the whole living world; that there cannot be traced a line which divides animal and vegetable kingdoms; that the difference between life and non-life is a difference in gradation and not substance—all this already has become commonplace in the new philosophy. After the recognition of physical evolution it is not difficult to say that the acknowledgment of psychic evolution is only a question of time."

The observation of the East astonishes and rejoices one. And not the obvious power of observation which leads to a dead stereotype but observation, fine and silent in its substance. One remembers how the teacher asked the newly arriving pupil to describe a room, but the room was empty and in a vessel was swimming only a tiny fish. In three hours the pupil wrote three pages, but the teacher rejected him, saying that about this one little fish he could have written all his life. In technical imitation is revealed the same sharp observation. In the adaptation of the meter of a song, in the character of a call, in movements, you see an all-powerful culture. Somewhere the Hindus, enveloped in their mantles, were compared to Roman senators. This is an inane comparison. Rather liken them to the philosophers of Greece, and still better, call them the creators of

the Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, Mahabharata. For neither Rome nor Greece existed when India was flourishing. The latest excavations begin to support this indubitable deduction.

. . . . . .

Hindus regard objects of art with fine understanding. From a Hindu you naturally expect an interesting approach and unusual remarks, and so it is. Therefore to show paintings to a Hindu is a real joy. How captivatingly they approach art! Do not think that they are occupied only in its contemplation. You will be astonished by their remarks about tonality, about technique, and about the expressiveness of the line. If the observer be long silent, do not think that he has become tired. On the contrary, this is a good sign. It means he has entered into a mood, and one can expect from him especially interesting deductions. Sometimes he will tell you a whole parable. And there will be nothing vulgar or crude about it. It is astonishing how transformed are the people of the East before the creations of art. Indeed it is more difficult for a European to enter into the current of creation, and as a rule he is less able to synthesize his impression.

. . . . . .

India, I know thy sorrows, but I shall remember thee with the same joyous tremor as the first flower on the spring meadow. From thy Brahmins we shall select the greatest who understood the Vedic wisdom. We shall select the Rajah who strove for the finding of the path of truth. We shall notice Vaishya and Shudra who have exalted their craft, and labor for the upliftment of the world. A boiling kettle is the forge of India. The dagger of faith over a white goat. The phantom flame of a bonfire over a widow. Conjurations and sorcery. Complicated are the folds of thy garments, India. Menacing are thy vestures blown by the whirlwind. And deadly burning are thy inclement rocks,

India. But we know thy fragrant essences. India, we know the depth and finesse of thy thoughts. We know the great AUM, which leads to the inexpressible Heights. We know thy great Guiding Spirit, India, we know thy ancient wisdom! Thy sacred scriptures in which is outlined the past, the present, the future. And we shall remember thee with the same tremor as the most precious first flower on the spring meadow.

THE FUTURE RELIGION

By Swami Vivekananda

(A letter written by the Swami to an Englishman)

New York,
9th August 1895.

. . . . It is only just that I should try to give you a little of my views. I fully believe that there are periodic ferments of religion in human society, and that such a period is now sweeping over the educated world. While each ferment, moreover, appears broken into various little bubbles, these are all eventually similar, showing the cause or causes behind them to be the same. That religious ferment, which at present is every day gaining a greater hold over thinking men, has this characteristic, that all the little thought-whirlpools into which it has broken itself declare one single aim—a vision and a search after the Unity of Being. On plains physical, ethical, and spiritual, an ever broadening generalisation—leading up to a concept of Unity Eternal—is in the air; and this being so, all the movements of the time may be taken to represent, knowingly or unknowingly, the noblest philosophy of the unity man ever had—the Adwaita-Vedanta.

Again, it has always been observed that as a result of

the struggles of the various fragments of thought in a given epoch, one bubble survives. The rest only arise to melt into it, and form a single great wave, which sweeps over society with irresistible force.

In India, America, and England(the countries I happen to know about)hundreds of these are struggling at the present moment. In India, dualistic formulae are already on the wane, the Adwaitas alone hold the field in force. In America, many movements are struggling for the mastery. All these represent Adwaita thought more or less, and that series which is spreading more rapidly, approaches nearer to it than any of the others. Now if anything was ever clear to me, it is that one of these must survive, swallowing up all the rest, to be the power of the future. Which is it to be?

Referring to history, we see that only that fragment which is fit will survive, and what makes fit to survive but *character?* Adwaita will be the future religion of thinking humanity. No doubt of that. And of all the sects, they alone shall gain the day, who are able to show most character in their lives—no matter how far they may be.

Let me tell you a little personal experience. When my Master left the body we were a dozen penniless and unknown young men. Against us were a hundred powerful organizations, struggling hard to nip us in the bud. But Ramakrishna had given us one great gift, the desire, and the life-long struggle not to talk alone, but to *live the life.* And today all India knows and reverences the Master, and the truths he taught are spreading like wild fire. Ten years ago, I could not get a hundred persons together to celebrate his birthday anniversary. Last year there were fifty thousand.

Neither numbers, nor powers, nor wealth, nor eloquence, nor anything else will prevail, but *purity, living the life,* in

one word, *anubhuti,* realization. Let there be but a dozen such lion-souls in each country, lions who have broken their own bonds, who have touched the Infinite, whose whole soul has gone to *Brahman,* who care neither for wealth, nor power, nor fame, and these will be *enough* to shake the world.

Here lies the secret. Says Patanjali, the father of Yoga, "When a man rejects all the superhuman powers, then he attains to the cloud of virtue." He sees God. He becomes God, and helps others to become the same. This is all I have to preach. Doctrines have been expounded enough. There are books by the million. Oh, for an ounce of practice!

As to societies and organizations, these will come of themselves. Can there be jealousy where there is nothing to be jealous of? The names of those who will wish to injure us will be legion. But is not that the surest sign of our having the truth? The more I have been opposed, the more my energy has always found expression. I have been driven away without a morsel of bread; I have been feasted and worshipped by princes. I have been slandered by priests and laymen alike. But what of it? Bless them all! They are my very self. And have they not helped me by acting as a spring-board, from which my energy could take higher and higher flights.

. . . . I have discovered one great secret—I have nothing to fear from *talkers* of religion. And the great ones who realize—they become enemies to none! Let talkers talk! They know no better! Let them have their fill of name and fame and money and woman. Hold we on to realization, to being *Brahman,* to becoming *Brahman.* Let us hold on to truth unto death, and from life to life! Let us pay not the least attention to what others say, and if, after a life-time's effort, one, only one, soul can break the fetters of the world

and be free, WE HAVE DONE OUR WORK. *Hari OM!*

. . . . One word more. Doubtless I do love India. But every day my sight grows clearer. What is India, or England, or America to us? We are the servants of that God who by the ignorant is called MAN. He who pours water at the root, does he not water the whole tree?

There is but one basis of well-being, social, political, or spiritual, to know that I and my brother are *one*. This is true for all countries and all people. And Westerners, let me say, will realize it more quickly than Orientals, who have almost exhausted themselves in formulating the idea and producing a few cases of individual realization.

Let us work without desire for name or fame or rule over others. Let us be free from the triple bonds of lust, greed of gain, and anger. And the truth is with us.

From their birth, men exercise their senses earlier than their intelligence, and are by necessity forced to direct their attention to objects of sense. Some stop there, and spend their life without progressing further; like those heavy birds who, having weighted themselves down by picking up too much from earth, cannot take flight, though by nature provided with wings.

Others indeed do lift themselves a little above the earth, because their soul withdraws from pleasures to seek something higher; but they have not the power to see the highest.

But there is a third order—those godlike men endowed with piercing vision, whose penetrating glance contemplates the splendors of the world above, and who rise unto it, taking their flight above the clouds and darkness of this world.

Then, full of scorn for terrestrial things, they remain and reside in their true fatherland, with the unspeakable bliss of the man who, after long journeying, returns at last home.

—*Plotinus*

HOLY NATIVITIES

IV.

Gautama Buddha

From the Buddhist Scriptures

The Scripture of the Saviour of the world,
Lord Buddha—Prince Siddartha styled on earth—
In Earth and Heavens and Hells Incomparable,
All-honored, Wisest, Best, most Pitiful;
The Teacher of Nirvana and the Law.
Thus came he to be born again for man.

—*The Light of Asia*

Around the birth of Prince Siddartha Gautama, afterwards the Lord Buddha, legends innumerable cluster—legends of gods and angels, of heavens and hells—legends that go back thousands of lives, and show the Bodhisatta, the Buddha to be, winning his way through mighty resolve, through deathless compassion, to the final liberation of Nirvana. We see him in the Tusita Heaven—the Heaven of Delight—awaiting the exact combination of time and circumstance that shall be for him the signal for his final descent into mortal form. The deities of the ten thousand world systems reverently approach him, and proclaim: "Now has the moment come, O Blessed One, for thy Buddhahood; now has the time, O Blessed One, arrived!" And the Bodhisatta, after surveying the conditions of the world, and determining when, where, and of what mother he is to be born, replies: "The time has come, O Blessed Ones, for me to become a Buddha." And forthwith he is conceived in the womb of Maha Maya, lady of Sudhodana, king of the Sakyas, inhabiting a little kingdom "under the southward snows of Himalay," to the north-east of the present province of Oudh. At this point we shall let the Scriptures take up the tale:

"At that time, in the city of Kapilavatthu, the festival of the full moon day of the month Asalha (June-July) had been proclaimed, and many people celebrated it. Queen Maya, from the seventh day before full moon, celebrated the festival without intoxicants, and with abundance of garlands and perfumes. Rising early on the seventh day, she bathed in scented water, and bestowed a gift of 400,000 pieces as alms. Fully adorned, she ate of choice food, took upon herself the uposatha vows, entered her adorned state bedchamber, lay down on the bed, and, falling asleep, dreamt this dream:

"The four great kings, it seemed, raised her together with the bed, and taking her to the Himalayas, set her on the Manosila tableland of sixty leagues, beneath a great sal-tree seven leagues high, and stood on one side. Then their queens came and took her to the Anotatta lake, bathed her to remove human stain, robed her in heavenly clothing, anointed her with perfumes, and bedecked her with divine flowers. Not far away is a silver mountain, and thereon a golden mansion. There they prepared a divine bed with its head to the east, and laid her upon it. Now the Bodhisatta became a white elephant. Not far from there is a golden mountain, and going there he descended from it, alighted on the silver mountain, approaching it from the direction of the north. In his trunk, which was like a silver rope, he held a white lotus, then, trumpeting, he entered the golden mansion, made a rightwise circle three times round his mother's bed, smote her right side, and appeared to enter her womb. Thus when the moon was in the lunar mansion Uttarasalha, he received a new existence.

"And on the next day the queen awoke and told her dream to the king. And the king caused sixty-four eminent Brahmins to be summoned and spread seats for them on

ground festively prepared with green leaves and dalbergia flowers. And when he had satisfied their every desire, he told them the dream and asked them what would come of it.

"The Brahmins said: 'Be not anxious, O King! A child hath planted itself in the womb of thy Queen. Thou shalt have a son, who, if he continue to live the household life, will become a universal monarch; but if he leave the household life and retire from the world, he will become a Buddha, and will remove from the world the veils of ignorance and sin.'

"Now the moment the future Buddha was conceived in the womb of his mother, an immeasurable light spread through the ten thousand worlds. The blind recovered their sight as if from desire to behold his glory; the deaf received their hearing; the dumb spake one with another. The crooked became straight; the lame recovered their power to walk; prisoners were loosed from their bonds and chains. All mortals began to speak kindly one with another; in all quarters of the heavens the weather became fair; a mild, cool breeze began to blow, very refreshing to men. Everywhere the earth was covered with lotuses, and celestial music was heard.

"From the time the future Buddha was thus conceived, four angels with swords in their hands kept guard to shield from harm the Bodhisatta and his mother. Pure in thought, having reached the highest aim and the highest honor, happy and unwearied was the mother. And the Bodhisatta's mother saw within her body the Bodhisatta with all his limbs and complete sense-organs. Like a beryl jewel, pure, noble, eight-sided, excellently worked, and threaded with a blue, yellow, red, white, or yellowish thread.

"Queen Maha Maya bearing the Bodhisatta for ten months like oil in a bowl, when her time was come, desired

to go to her relatives' house, and addressed King Suddhodana, 'I wish, O King, to go to Devadaha, the city of my family.' The king approved, and caused the road from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha to be made smooth and adorned with vessels filled with plantains, flags, and banners, and seating her in a golden palanquin borne by a thousand courtiers, sent her with a great retinue. Between the two cities, and belonging to the inhabitants of both, is a pleasure grove of sal-trees named the Lumbini grove. At that time, from the roots to the tips of the branches it was one mass of flowers, and from within the branches and flowers hosts of bees of the five colors and flocks of birds sported, singing sweetly.

"When the queen saw it, a desire to sport in the grove arose. The courtiers brought the queen and entered the grove. She went to the foot of a great sal-tree, and desired to seize a branch. The branch, like the tip of a supple reed, bent down and came within reach of her hand. Stretching out her hand she seized the branch. Thereupon she was shaken with the throes of birth. So the multitude set up a curtain for her, and retired. Holding the branch, and even while standing, she was delivered. At that moment, the four pure-minded Mahabrahmas came with a golden net, and therewith receiving the Bodhisatta, set him before his mother, and said, 'Rejoice, O Queen, a mighty son has been born to thee.' The Bodhisatta, like a preacher of the Doctrine descending from the seat of Doctrine, like a man descending stairs, stretched out his two hands and feet, and standing unsoiled and unstained by any impurity, shining like a jewel laid on Benares cloth, descended from his mother. Nevertheless, to do honor to the Bodhisatta and his mother, two streams of water descended from the sky, and performed the regular ceremony on the bodies of the Bodhisatta and his mother.

"Then from the hands of the Brahmas, who stood and received him in a golden net, the four Great Kings received him on a ceremonial robe of antelope skin, soft to the touch, and from their hands human beings received him on a silken cushion, and when he was freed from the hands of human beings, he stood on the earth and looked at the eastern quarter. Gods and men then worshipped him with scented garlands, and said, 'Great Being, there is here none like thee, much less superior anywhere.' So having examined the four quarters, the intermediate quarters, the nadir and the zenith, ten quarters, and not seeing anyone like himself, he said, 'This is the northern quarter,' and took seven steps. While Mahabrahma held a white parasol over him, and Suyama a fan, and other divinities followed with the other symbols of royalty in their hands, he stopped at the seventh step, and raising his lordly voice, 'I am the chief in the world,' he roared his lion-roar!

"The people of both towns took the Bodhisatta and went to Kapilavatthu. On that day too, the choir of angels were astonished and rejoiced, saying: "In Kapilavatthu, to Suddhodana the King, a son is born, who will become a Buddha!'

"At that time á hermit Asita, on the side of a peak of the Himalayas, saw these angels, and asked them: 'Why are ye thus rejoicing, glad at heart?'

"The angels replied: 'To Suddhodana the King a son is born who will found a kingdom of righteousness. To us it will be given to see his infinite grace and to hear his word. Therefore it is that we are glad!'

"So the great sage Asita, with his nephew Naradatta, like a great swan rose up and flew through the air to the great city of Kapilavatthu. Then the doorkeeper approached king Suddhodana and with clasped hands said to the king, 'Know, O king, that an aged sage stands at the

door.' The king prepared a seat for Asita, and said to the man, 'Let the sage enter.' Now Asita approached king Suddhodana, and standing in front of him said, 'Victory, victory, O king! Live long, and rule thy kingdom righteously.' Then the king paid reverence to the feet of Asita, and seeing him seated in comfort said, 'With what purpose hast thou come hither?' Thereupon Asita said to the king, 'A son has been born to thee, O King; desiring to see him, I have come.' The king said, 'The boy is asleep. O sage, wait a short while until he wakes.' The sage said, 'Not long, O king, do such great beings sleep. Such good beings are by nature wakeful.' Thus did the Bodhisatta, out of compassion for Asita the great sage, make a sign of awaking.

"Then the king, taking the boy Savarthasiddha well and duly in both hands, brought him into the presence of the sage. Thus Asita, observing, beheld the Bodhisatta, endowed with the thirty-two marks of a great man, and adorned with the eighty minor marks. And looking at him, he wept, and shedding tears, sighed deeply.

"The king beheld Asita weeping, and beholding him the hair of his body rose, and in distress he hastily said to Asita, 'Why, O sage, dost thou weep? Surely there is no misfortune for the boy?' At this, Asita said to the king, 'O king, I weep not for the sake of the boy. There will be no misfortune for him, but I weep for myself—I, O king, am old, and this boy Savarthasiddha will without doubt attain supreme complete enlightenment. And having done so will take countless beings across the ocean of transmigration to the other side, and establish them in the immortal state. But we shall not see that Buddha-jewel. Hence, O king, I weep.' . . . . . .

"So the king gratified the great sage Asita together with Naradatta his nephew with suitable food, and having given

him robes made a rightwise circuit round him. Then Asita by his magic power departed through the air, and arrived at his hermitage. Thereupon Asita said to Naradatta his nephew, 'When thou shalt hear, Naradatta, that a Buddha has arisen in the world, then go and abandon the world under his teaching.' "

REPORT

Immediately after the first Sunday of March, Swami Paramananda left Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, journeyed to the Atlantic Coast to his Boston Centre, and remained there throughout the month, delivering three Services every Sunday—morning at eleven o'clock, afternoon at three-thirty, and evening at eight. The afternoon Service was especially for the benefit of the out-of-town members. The Swami also conducted the regular Tuesday evening Class, and presided over the Hindu dinner Thursday evening.

During Swami Paramananda's absence from Boston, the work is ably conducted by Srimati Charu Shila Devi, who has, by her faithful administration, won many staunch friends for the teaching.

At Ananda Ashrama, during the Swami's absence, all the public activities were carried on faithfully by Srimati Gayatri Devi, who also held the regular Services at the Los Angeles Centre, 745 West Adams Street, as well as at the Pasadena Vedanta Library.

NOTICE

The public activities at the Cohasset Ashrama will be resumed during the latter part of May. For all information please write to the Vedanta Centre, 32 Fenway, Boston.

It is hoped that Swami Paramananda will hold a Summer School during the month of July at the Ananda Ashrama. Those who are interested to attend, please communicate with the Ananda-Ashrama, Box 85, La Crescenta, California.

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Message of the East

MAY, 1930

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
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LOVE

From The Symposium of Plato

LOVE is the divinity who creates peace among men, and calm upon the sea, the windless silence of storms, repose and sleep in sadness. Love divests us of all alienation from each other, and fills our vacant hearts with overflowing sympathy.

Yes, Love, who showers benignity upon the world, and before whose presence all harsh passions flee and perish; the author of all soft affections; the destroyer of all ungentle thoughts; merciful, mild, the object of the admiration of the wise, and the delight of the gods; possessed by the fortunate, and desired by the unhappy, therefore unhappy because they possess him not.

The father of grace and delicacy, and delight and persuasion; the cherisher of all that is good, the abolisher of all evil; our most excellent pilot, defence, saviour and guardian in labor and in fear, in desire and in reason; the ornament and governor of all things human and divine; the best, the loveliest; in whose footsteps every one ought to follow, celebrating him excellently in song, and bearing each his part in that divinest harmony which love sings to all things which live and are, soothing the troubled minds of gods and men.

CAN WE LOVE OUR ENEMIES?

By Swami Paramananda

(An Address delivered under the acacia tree at Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, on Sunday, May 18th, 1930.)

Let us lift our thoughts and prayers to the One Infinite Being—
Mother and Father of us all—Giver of all blessings—
Embodiment of all blessedness.
Let us be bereft of every other thought, every other concern,
That our hearts may be in tune, in rhythm, and in harmony
with the Great and Divine Spirit of the universe.
May the song of the birds teach us to sing with joyousness of soul,
That we may feel the closeness of the Divine heart,
Forgetting our imperfections, our shortcomings, our unworthiness,
And laying aside the weight of life, and the sense of mortality.
In this hour of silence, may we inhale the very life breath of
the Divine Presence about us, pervading and permeating all
things.
May that One bestow upon us His loving and abiding protection
and keep us ever and ever in peace.
Peace, peace, peace be unto us, and to all living beings.

Never have I felt so impressed as I am feeling this morning, sitting here in this Nature's Sanctuary. How insignificant our temples, churches, and cathedrals seem in comparison. As I have listened to the song of the birds—a song that comes out of no calculation or training, a song that is sung without any desire to create an effect, a spontaneous outburst of the soul—I have thought, "If only we could be like that, what healing it would bring!" Sometimes I feel like saying, "Can we not get rid of all we have accumulated, things that throw their weight upon us—our wealth, our worldly wisdom, our shrewdness, our skill—can we not lay these aside, and breathe freely the breath that God provides for us, unmixed with baser elements?"

Today I have chosen a theme of interest to us all—that is, to those of us who are trying to find a practical solution

for life: "Can We Love Our Enemies?" I am sure that many of you have asked this question, and I am simply going to bring thoughts that may prove helpful to you in your application of this great principle of love, without which Christianity is no Christianity, Hinduism is no Hinduism, in spite of their theories, dogmas, rituals, and formulas.

We are living in an age when we think only in the terms of outer values. We are interested in collecting credentials; we have an idea that university degrees and material resources will give us access anywhere, even into the Kingdom of God. Do we really believe this, or are we merely trying to fool ourselves? Let us be honest. There is no more appropriate shrine than this for thinking honest thoughts. Here we are not bound by rituals, or walls created by man's hand; here there is nothing to bar the mind and make us feel suffocated. So let us think freely, and face the true facts of life.

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." These are the words of the Christ. If a Christian lived them, breathed them, he would not need to pronounce a word when he desired to convert another; his contact would become so dynamic that no one would be able to resist him—his whole being would pulsate with the force of his realization.

There is another saying that I am going to read to you because it has puzzled me: "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." St. Paul said this, and I have wondered what it could mean. Are we to give to our enemy only in order to humiliate him? Perhaps humanity at that time had so degenerated, that, just as churches today introduce moving pictures and similar inducements to draw the souls of men, so St. Paul put his thought in this form in

order to tempt men who were bent on revenge and hatred with the thought that by practising love and forgiveness they might punish their enemies. Of course, once we begin to love we cannot hate, only it is a tragedy when we cannot see the Truth and accept it for its own sake.

It is surprising how in India they transmute every bit of human emotion into a redeeming factor. For instance, a drunkard once came to a saint and said, "Sire, I cannot control my desire for liquor; I am absolutely drowned in it."

"Never mind," the saint replied, "take your drink; only think, when you take it, that you are offering it to Divinity."

This may sound very peculiar to you; but in this way the saint implanted a seed in the man's mind: for a moment he was able to forget himself and turn his mind to something higher. As the occasion was repeated and he was reminded again and again of the Divine aspect, the taste for drink, along with other evil habits, became less, and finally left him altogether.

We must infuse lofty ideals into our life, and find their practical application. No man is so strong that he can afford to hate anyone. Even those who may seem low and degenerate we cannot help by hating them.

"No love is really love that has for its opposite hate. True love is always universal." Love everything. Why should you be afraid to love when you know it is the most dynamic power possessed by man, the only constructive force, the one thing that can bring us healing. We all have a thirst for self-preservation, therefore, after the manner of St. Paul, I am going to urge that you form the habit of loving, if only because of the benefit it will bring to you yourself. For though you may begin to love in that way, you will not end there. Your love will become more and more universal, and gradually you will forget the habit of hatred. Hate is a

hard, harsh, dissonant word. Poets do not like to use it—they would rather choose words that are delicate; but today men like things which shock and create an impression.

"So long as a man has an enemy, and cannot bear to have any good come to that enemy, he cannot have real love." You may think, "These are the sayings of the mystics—of Christ and Christlike spirits—great dreamers—there is no room in this world for such as these." For whom, then, shall we make room? We say we love God, and are following some religion. What religion, and of what nature? Does it indicate real life, the essence of ethics and philosophy—things we believe to be fundamental—or is it only a sham, a show, full of uncertainty and vagueness? This question I am asking myself, and I am asking you. We are asking it together, in order that we may find a solution—something we can carry into practical life. Let us really face these things, instead of being like cowards, afraid of truth, afraid of sunlight.

"We must either let the law of love rule us through and through or not at all. War will only be stopped when the conscience of mankind has become sufficiently elevated to recognize the undisputed supremacy of the Law of Love in all the walks of life. Some say this will never come to pass. I shall retain the faith until the end of my earthly existence that it shall come to pass." This is from a man upon whom the eye of the world is focused today. I have just read the words of Mahatma Gandhi. People are wondering if he is going to succeed. He cannot fail. Love has never failed. He will succeed in the same way that Christ and Buddha and St. Francis succeeded. Perhaps it will not be success from our standard, but who is going to follow our standard, and for how long? How long are we going to follow it? I am asking you: how long? Man builds up a little power, and

feels that he has established something tremendous. But before his life is over, it is demolished; and certainly it does not live after he is gone. So let us choose a truer standard, and if we have any fear, weakness, or misgiving, let us pray that our spirit may be roused, and that we may be made more human, and less inclined to stoop toward our lower instincts. It is by becoming ever more and more truly human that we approach the ideal of Divinity, and aspire for those things which give us wings for flight.

"I believe in loving my enemies. I believe in the power of suffering to melt the stoniest heart. Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism—in fact religion itself is on trial. Either we believe in God and His righteousness or we do not. No power on earth can stop the onward march of a peaceful, determined and Godly people." Here, Mahatma Gandhi lays the whole thing before us. If I were to say, "This is not Christianity," you would reply, "It is the very foundation of Christianity." A man is not a Christian merely because he bears the label. Though he may declare himself to be one, if he goes forth to fight the rest of the world with gun and sword, there will be no place for him in Christianity, no room for such a type in the heart of Buddha, in the heart of Hinduism, or in the heart of anything that is true and fundamental. "Religion is on trial!" The challenge is there. If you say, "I do not believe this," that does not mean anything whatsoever. If you say, "These things are not practical," that does not suffice. Have you given them thought? Have you dedicated yourself to something other than food, and clothes, and bodily concerns? When a man goes and "fights for his rights," as we call it, sacrificing comfort, even life itself, for the sake of material gain, we think it wonderful. But when out of ten million men—out of a hundred million—one man dies

for the sake of God, we say, "That man was a fool!" This is our standard today. You are thinking; I am thinking; everyone, who is not asleep or trying to deaden himself, is thinking. That is why I have chosen this subject. Even if you are not interested in the welfare of the world, even then I will put these ideas before you. You are interested in yourself, in your home, in your happiness, in your own life. Very well, start from that. All that we need is to change our state of consciousness. We are hypnotized by material things. We are drunk with ambition, power, and self-love. But there is not a particle of happiness to be found in these. No man has ever found it in that way. How then do you expect to find it? A man who believes he is clever enough not to be affected by these things, he is mistaken. No man can be clever enough to rise and really succeed through false means.

"I believe in loving my enemies . . ." What Gandhi says here is almost like an echo of my own thoughts. "Religion is on trial. . . ." It has always been. I can quote from many sources—Tennyson, Emerson, Shakespeare—from all the men who have lived in history—and not find one who teaches us that we thrive by hating. You may go home with the thought, "Christ teaches us to forgive, but St. Paul gives us the real solution when he tells us that we must love our enemy in order to destroy him." We never destroy anyone but ourselves. A murderer, for instance, escapes the law—at least he thinks he does—he runs away, and hides himself in some secluded spot, but his brooding thought finally overwhelms him. Everywhere the Law holds, because it is inherent in our own being. Man himself is the law unto himself. His good thought, his noble instinct, his spiritual idealism, his power to transmit love, inevitably bring expansion to his soul and make him God-loving. Same way, the opposite takes place when, through misguided zeal, he abandons

these qualities, and becomes filled with the intoxication of egotism, ambition, a false sense of values, and a desire to dominate. These are all of ungodly nature. Until we can overcome them, we can have no peace or happiness, and religion will be for us only an empty sound.

Practical, practical, practical religion! That is my plea. And yet some of you say, "Why does he not give us practical teaching like the psychologists—this one or that one?" My friends, I am not on the market for sale, and I never shall be. What are you seeking? Are you seeking God—Truth—or do you want someone to think for you, and give you your salvation, your liberty, and your illumination? Even Christ and Buddha never ventured that. Their concern was to rouse the spirit of man—to redeem his dead hope, when he had lost his faith and courage.

Perhaps you feel that we cannot but return hatred for hatred. You say, "We are not even able to extend our love in even tenor to those we think we love—our friends, our family—yet here comes the order that we must love our enemies." It seems to you like an altogether false concept—a dream—a vision—is it not so? The thing is to begin, even in the smallest way. Plant the seed. During the years that we have been here, I have watched Nature, and, my friends, I have seen a little seed, which fell to the ground uncared for, germinate, and grow into a tree, under whose shade we may now sit and find shelter. Just so is the love that we behold in Christ, and Buddha, and this astounding personality, Gandhi. Prison is no prison for such a soul. There is nothing that can vanquish a man who believes in love; and if you believe in it, you will revolutionize that little problem at home; you will not have to go to any psychologist to remedy it, you will transform it through your power of love. There is nothing that can resist that. Do not let us whimper,

and whine, and cry, and say this thing will never be. It will be, but only when we have become truly human.

We merely provoke people when we try to convert them with long-sounding words: "This is my religion—my faith—follow it or you will be doomed." If you find somebody who you feel has gone astray, and who is not living according to your ideal, do not go to him with long lectures; overwhelm him by your own conduct and love.

Some day you may find that I shall change this public activity; often I feel the uselessness of it, the futility. The only thing that counts is living the life, creating a power that no one can resist. I speak very frankly to you. I did not know that I was going to speak this way—I have no written sermons—but perhaps it is because these are thoughts that you and I both need. It does not make any difference what you call yourself: be something that satisfies your own soul. Do not always look around to see whether your friend or your neighbor or the public approves: gain the sanction of your inmost being. The recognition that you desire from others, seek it from within. Be strong; stand up; and never deny the fact that you have in yourself the power to put this ideal into practice. Once you learn to love and cherish the God-part within you, your very countenance will show how your life is transformed. Awaken that love in your soul, and you will be invincible.

This is no negative ideal. How unfortunate it is that we look upon these high ideals merely as negation. We think that a man who talks of these things must be a good-for-nothing, with no stamina. We believe only in that which strikes a harsh, dissonant note. Even some preachers believe this way. Many years ago, I was taking part in a conference. It was at Greenacre, and a minister was to speak on "Productive Spirituality." We were all very eager, for we

thought we were going to hear something that would give us practical suggestions. I do not remember the details—it was so long ago—but his words came to this, that any man who gives himself to meditation or prayer should really be put in jail. Such fools must be locked up, because they are a menace to our civilization. His idea of productive spirituality was learning to think in a clever, calculating way, so that we might become successful business men. But why should we stoop to such a goal? The ultimate end of not a few successful business men has been suicide, or else some crash or unhappiness.

You, who have been nurtured on all that material life provides, may think, "What does he know? He says these things because he comes from a poor country." I beg your pardon, India is not so poor; on the contrary, it is because of her riches that every one has coveted her. Neither poverty nor riches, however, can teach us to love God; yet each can lead us to the very gate of heaven, if we learn how to transmute the forces that are within us.

What is the matter with humanity? We desire to find the fruition of love, to acquire the sanctity of nobility. We want the highest idealism, the best; yet how can we produce the best? Not by planting the seeds of discontent, disbelief, and distrust, in the soil of our life. When even in our own homes we are not able always to place our implicit trust in the people who are most closely connected with us, how can we hope for happiness? "What is to be done?" you ask. Begin at the foundation, with the little love you feel for some chosen person. Extend it. Learn to love more and more; let that be your saving grace. Forget your failures—forget yourself. For years you have been persuaded that this is not practical—your friends have said so; everyone has said so. But what do they know about religion? Fools

dwelling in darkness, puffed up with ignorance, strive to conduct the affairs of others—the blind led by the blind! Both fall into the ditch. This thought is from the Vedic Upanishads; Christ said a similar thing. So let us not be blind, but let us be instrumental in keeping others from blindness.

Love will give us light; it will give us faith, and hope, and courage; our whole being will be transformed. Perhaps you will take this as a poetic fancy—the outburst of a dreamer, a madman. Take it just as you like. I have spoken from my depth, and I hope it may rouse something in you, so that you will infuse your own religion, your own faith, your own feeling into that which is of living value, and no longer carry the dead weight of dogma, the crust of creed, which is of no avail to you or to anybody else. When we are thirsty and ask for a drink, and somebody responds with some slogan, naturally we rebel; we say, "I do not want words—give me water!" Same way dogmatic religion seems to those who are thirsty for solace; who long for God; who hunger for the Real.

Let us in this hour of silence make our hearts free from all thoughts but one—the thought of love—love for those whom we already love, that we may love them more worthily, that we may love them more intensely;

And love toward those whom we call our enemies—those we feel cannot love.

For God has given us this Divine grace, that we may learn to extend it to others, and thus work out our salvation.

May His peace, peace, peace be unto us, and to all living beings.

A violent answer is like the brandishing of weapons; but speak with the graciousness of affection and thou shalt be beloved forever.

—*From the Maxims of Ani.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

To suffer woes which hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy power, which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

—*Shelley.*

He who forgives ends the quarrel. —*African Proverb.*

Let us impart all the blessings we possess or ask for ourselves to the whole family of mankind.

—*George Washington.*

They long for your ruin. Hatred hath already shewn itself out of their mouths, but more grievous is what their breasts conceal. . . .

See now! ye love them, but they love not you.

—*The Koran.*

My son, if thine enemy meet thee with evil, meet thou him with good.

—*The Apocrypha.*

Love—it is heaven. And hate?
Hate is hell. And conscience?
Conscience is the eye of God in the soul of men.

—*Cudoc.*

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

—*St. John.*

THE FILAMENT

By Eliot White

(Suggested by a photograph of Mahatma Gandhi in meditation.)

Before you turn the current through its span,
You scarcely trace within your tungsten lamp
The arabesque of its so slender wire.
This fine-spun metal shred you say can bear
The vehement impact of the voltage leap?
Such fragile fiber surely must collapse
Beneath the seizure. Yet by miracle
It crumbles not, but steadfast, see, turns gold
With dazzling fire coursing now its length,
And glows in splendor to the spark's command! . . .
So one beholds this oriental saint
A picture shows, mere wisp of human form,
With limbs like reeds and face delved by stern fasts
And love and anguish for a race's woes.
Here where he rests so languidly it seems
Such frame could never bear the awful stress
Of prophecy that smites with strength divine,
And vision turning man to flame of God.
Yet it has brooked that might, and shall again.
O wondrous power that thrills such filament
With ardor to a molten stream of light!
And marvel of the answering soul of man
That though it burns the body to thin ash
Conducts that glory to a world's new hope.

As pure water poured into pure water becomes one, so also is it with the Self of an illumined Knower. (He becomes one with the Supreme.)

—*Katha Upanishad.*

AN INDIAN MASTER-MIND*

By Waldemar Kaempffert

Journalists and even scientists, who ought to know better, regard Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose as an ethnologic paradox. That an Indian steeped in the age-old beliefs of his country should be the peer of any Western experimental physicist, and should have enriched biology with discoveries of far-reaching import is to them a freakish phenomenon. The Indian is meditative, speculative, and imaginative, it is argued. Can he reason from objective facts, and inductively develop from them a scientific doctrine that will stand severe practical tests? To Europe and America Bose is an inexplicable exception to a long-accepted theory of oriental scientific incompetence.

We are apt to forget that science, as we know it, is only a few centuries old, that study of force and matter, in a modern sense, to discover underlying natural laws began only with Galileo and Newton, that most of the brilliant scientific researches have been conducted within the past hundred and fifty years, and that before the comparatively recent development of scientific methods of inquiry, Europe was as speculative, as metaphysical, as India or China. But even if the history of European scientific thought be ignored, as it usually is when East and West are contrasted, five minutes' conversation with Bose is enough to shatter the illusions that the average American or European cherishes about the limitations of the oriental intellect. True, Bose is devoutly religious; but religious devotion is no more incompatible with science in an Indian than a firm belief in the Holy Ghost is incompatible with the science of a Jesuit astronomer. If

*Reprint from "Asia", March, 1923 issue, by the kind permission of the Editors.

you expect a Eurasian blending of Indian mysticism and half-hearted acceptance of Western scientific teachings, with Indian mysticism in the ascendant, in Bose, you are sure to be disappointed. He is an incarnate proof that there is neither an oriental mind nor an occidental mind, but just mind.

This thick-set, middle-aged man in a priestlike garb, mobile of feature and sparkling of eye and wearing gold pince-nez, astonishes you when you question him. His pose, his dignity, his utter lack of vanity, would impress even if he were not so precise and clear in his exposition. He talks and lectures like a Western scientist—only with the rich vocabulary and with the cultivated English accent of a Cambridge man who knows his Shakespeare and his Wordsworth. In the European scientist the steeling of the mind to anything that smacks of a personal interpretation of nature has often been accompanied by a withering of the feeling for beauty. Darwin bitterly lamented the fact that his researches in biology had completely atrophied his appreciation of poetry. With Bose it is otherwise. Science has but enhanced his emotional reactions to the plants that he has studied.

He is a physicist to his finger-tips, with a complete technical command of all the resources of his science, but his conversation, instead of being the usual colorless discussion of graphs and formulas, is a vividly imaginative presentation of laboratory results, which arrests even the attention of one to whom physics is about as intelligible as esoteric Buddhism. His poetic aptness of expression makes his description of his marvelous machines entrancing. His nice choice of words marks the *littérateur* rather than the scientist. When he speaks of plants, to the physical study of which he has devoted the better part of his maturer life, they cease to be mere masses of green fiber and leafage, and become sentient organisms. Though he does not tell you that they

have souls, you feel that he regards them as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Yet superstition he rejects, as he does all earthly, money-making temptations; the ancient religious interpretations of nature he accepts not blindly, but because his own work seems to confirm them.

All this you feel not only in what he says, but in what he refrains from saying. It may be oriental politeness or it may be exceptional liberality of view that causes him to listen rather than to argue when questions of mere faith are discussed—questions that cannot be answered by reference to incontrovertible facts. But when he speaks of scientific results, when he feels that he is on firm ground, he punctures a false inference or a careless statement with a finality from which there is no appeal. But he does it with a graceful deference of manner that has in it no trace of the autocratic pedant.

An imagination such as his is found only in the great synthetic scientists—men like Darwin, who take ten thousand apparently unrelated facts and show that they are but manifestations of one universal law. For those who have a genius for synthesis it is not enough that a discovery is made. Where does it fit in the cosmic scheme? Bose's reasoning and his imagination do not rest until he finds the underlying relationship that enables him to link an isolated fact with another and another. Hence his scientific hypotheses, based on the facts that he has painstakingly gathered, have an epic sweep foreign to the narrow interpretations of the mere analyst of matter.

To him science means as much as religion. He founded in Calcutta the Bose Research Institute in much the same spirit as that in which a temple is established. It represents years of sacrifice; for all that he could save from his meager salary as a university professor, all his lecture-fees, all his

book-royalties have been unselfishly applied in giving to his country its first research institution. And when he opened it, he called upon his disciples "to devote their whole life with strengthened character and determined purpose to see the truth face to face." He stipulated that the Institute should be open to the world—free from academic limitations, free to all races and languages, free to men and women alike, "and for all time coming." Thus he was carrying out the traditions of India, "which, so far back as twenty-five centuries ago, welcomed all scholars from different parts of the world within the precincts of its ancient seats of learning at Nalanda and Taxila."

The ideals of Asoka live in him. Although Asoka built a vast empire, he tried to ransom the world. Everything that he had he gave, and at last there came a time when he had nothing left but an *amalaka* fruit, and even of this he gave one half. Asoka's emblem of the amalaka adorns the cornices of the Bose Institute. When it was thus embodied in the decoration of a building that is destined to be a monument to Indian science, Bose remarked: "It is but one half of the amalaka fruit that we can offer now."

He was a teacher in the Presidency College of Calcutta when he began his first researches, conducted after hours of wearisome lecturing, paper-correcting and syllabus-writing. On his thirty-fifth birthday he made a vow, Indian fashion—the vow that thereafter he would devote himself to a self-sacrificing life of research without a thought of personal gain. And for that life he was peculiarly fitted by his Cambridge training, and his unrivalled skill in experimentation.

His first announcement came in the early nineties, at a time when the scientific world was in turmoil. Clerk Maxwell, a distinguished professor in the University of Cambridge, had demonstrated in one of the most brilliant mathe-

matical investigations of modern times, that light is an electromagnetic wave motion in the ether, and had conjectured that there were other electromagnetic waves—waves that might be called "invisible light." An artificial sense-organ, a man-made eye, was needed to see these invisible rays, which, like the rays of the sun, could be reflected and refracted, and to which mountains, human bodies and fog were as transparent as glass. Then came Heinrich Hertz, a professor in the University of Bonn, with a simple detector of the unseen waves, the very artificial sense-organ needed to verify Maxwell's hypothesis that the world was flooded with invisible rays. Although it remained for Marconi to use the waves in wireless communication, their discovery by Hertz was a scientific event fully as important as the discovery of the X-rays or of radium. After Hertz came Branly of the University of Paris with an artificial sense-organ still better than that of Hertz—nothing but a little tube filled with metal filings or powder. When the waves struck the tube, the particles clung together and became a conductor of electricity; a tap sufficed to shake the filings apart, ready for a new inundation of waves. It was with such a "coherer," as it was called, that the first wireless signals were later received.

It was at this point that Western science first heard of Bose. He was sent to Europe by the Indian government to lecture. In the principal capitals the foremost scientists came to hear him. Henri Poincaré, greatest of modern French mathematicians, Lord Kelvin, dean of British science, Cailletet, famous for his liquification of gases, Lippmann, whose work in color photography is now classic, Quincke of Heidelberg, Warburg of Berlin—all listened with rapt admiration to Bose's exposition of his study of Hertzian waves, and their detection by startlingly ingenious devices,

compared with which Branly's coherer was but a rudimentary eye. Warburg told one investigator: "Better drop electric waves. Bose has left you nothing to do."

Bose's wireless detectors were of a sensitivity comparable with that of the retina to light. But the retina has its limitations. It cannot see radiant heat or wireless waves. Could the human eye be surpassed? Could not an eye be made that would see both the visible and the invisible, an eye with a supersensitive retina? Bose fashioned it. He juggled it at will. He made it blind to wireless and heat waves by placing in front of it a glass of water—the equivalent of the aqueous humor of our own eyes. He gave it a recording brain in the form of a delicate electric measuring instrument. The mere removal of the water restored the power of the eye to see the heat waves and the electrical waves that our eyes can never see. And what was this eye? Merely two crystals of a form of lead known as "galena"—crystals so dead that they symbolize inactivity, and in reality so marvelously sensitive that they are far more responsive to external stimulus than any human sense-organ. After learning what this Indian scientist thus accomplishes with inert matter, one may feel a momentary impulse to hold nature up to scorn. Bose simply comments, with an Indian's reverence for nature: "Perhaps we do not sufficiently appreciate the importance of that protective contrivance which veils our eyes from insufferable radiance."

When Bose accepted the invitation of the Royal Institution in London to lecture before its members, what they heard was a revelation. The accepted theories of coherer action were wrong—theories based upon the supposition that the metal particles were in some way feebly soldered together by the invisible waves and could be shaken apart by a tap. Europe learned from Bose that the cohering action is but an

effect similar to that which occurs when a photographic plate is exposed. The metal powder and the plate are both composed of molecules, and the molecules are strained in the one case by invisible, Hertzian waves, in the other, by visible light waves. The strain is similar to that known to all of us in a stretched rubber band. Rest relieves the photographic plate, so much so that, after months and years, it discloses no image upon development.

Perceiving that the strain was a clear case of fatigue, in every way comparable to muscle fatigue, Bose had begun at once a characteristically thorough study of metals to determine not their suitability for the detection of wireless waves, but the strains to which they could be subjected. Gunmakers knew that something happened to steel when projectiles were fired from barrels over and over again, but an explanation was not forthcoming. Bose proceeded to test all the metals upon which he could lay his hands—tested them as he would tissue cut from an animal. He devised instruments which enabled them to record their state, and the evidence so gathered left no room for doubt. Muscle twitches under certain electrical conditions; so does a metal, as Bose found. Dead tissue is irresponsive; so are metals that have been abused to the point of inactivity. He froze metals; they became torpid, like an icy hand. He narcotized them and discovered that their electrical responses were quite like those of an organism. He pinched them and struck them, and their behavior was that of living flesh. He rained blows upon them, and they wearied and swooned so that the needles of his recorders swung to the zero point.

The autobiographical record of a strained metal invariably agrees with that of the strained or fatigued muscle. "Dead" matter is alive, in the sense that it responds to external stimulus as if it were endowed with feeling. No other conclusion

can be drawn. The distinction between life and death becomes meaningless—so much so that Bose himself rarely uses the word "death," and distinguishes in his scientific papers only between the "living and the non-living."

Sir Michael Foster, one of England's foremost physiologists, saw one of the records. "What is there new in this? All this is familiar."

"What do you think it is?" Bose asked.

"The well-known curve indicating the response of muscle," Foster explained.

"It is the response of metallic tin," Bose answered.

Foster was overwhelmed. Here was an Indian who had bridged the gap between "dead" matter and the living organism.

Boldly Bose voiced his own conviction:

"Amongst such phenomena how can we draw the line of demarcation and say that here the physical ends and there the physiological begins? Such absolute barriers do not exist. Do not these records tell us of some property of matter common and persistent? Do they not show us that the responsive processes, seen in life, have been fore-shadowed in non-life—that the physiological is related to the physico-chemical—that there is no abrupt break, but a uniform, continuous march of law?"

To be concluded.

What shall make thee to know what the last proof is? It is to ransom the captive, to feed in the day of famine the orphan near of kin, or the poor man who lieth in the dust; and beside this, to be of those who enjoin steadfastness on each other, and encourage each other to mercy—these are the people of the right hand!

—*Koran.*

A PROPHECY

From Isaiah

Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. . . .

The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. . . .

Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. . . .

For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness.

Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders: but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

The sun shall no more be thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.

Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

When opposing warriors join in battle, he who hath pity doth conquer. —*Tao Teh King.*

A DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS

By William Lloyd Garrison

(Written for the newly formed New England Non-Resistant Society, 1838.)

Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind. We love the land of our nativity only as we love all other lands. The interests, rights, liberties of American citizens are no more dear to us than are those of the whole human race. . . .

The history of mankind is crowded with evidences proving that physical coercion is not adapted to moral regeneration; that the sinful disposition of men can be subdued only by love; that evil can be exterminated from the earth only by goodness; that it is not safe to rely upon an arm of flesh, upon man whose breath is in his nostrils, to preserve us from harm; that there is great security in being gentle, harmless, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy; that it is only the meek who shall inherit the earth, that the violent who resort to the sword are destined to perish with the sword. Hence, as a measure of sound policy—of safety to property, life and liberty—of public quietude and private enjoyment—as well as on the ground of allegiance to Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, we cordially adopt the non-resistance principle, being confident that it provides for all possible consequences. . . .

While we shall adhere to the doctrine of non-violence and passive submission to enemies, we purpose, in a moral and spiritual sense, to speak and act boldly in the cause of God; to assail iniquity in high places and in low places; to apply our principles to all existing evil, political, legal and ecclesiastical institutions; and to hasten the time when the kingdoms of this world will have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever.

HOLY NATIVITIES

IV.

ZARATHUSHTRA

From the Pahlavi Texts

Legends always cling around the life story of a world teacher. Standing, as such a one does, above the common level of humanity, he seems to appear in our midst clothed in garments of a subtler world, bringing with him rumour of other states of being, which throw their glamour over the human facts of his existence—his birth, and death, and every-day living. Sometimes these legends come to us brokenly from the mists of the past; sometimes they are consecutive and strangely convincing, seeming to be the report of a living experience rather than the accretions from men's imaginations; then again, we feel they may be symbols veiling some common cosmic fact. They are, however, always interesting and appealing, and often similar in their trend of events.

Zarathushtra, the founder of Zoroastrianism, the religion of ancient Persia, did not lack for signs and wonders to proclaim his divine origin. Yet, owing to the fact that most of the original scriptures were destroyed in 700 A. D. by the Arabian conquerors of Persia, who forced the religion of Mohammed upon the inhabitants, his birth story is decidedly fragmentary. Had it not been for certain faithful ones who fled into India, taking with them some of the most precious of the Holy Books, as well as the memory of the sacred tradition, we would have now little to tell us that such a religion had ever existed. So it is from the Parsees of Bombay—the descendants of the Fire-worshippers—comes this little that we know of their prophet:

In western Iran, about the middle of the seventh century B.C., there was born into the world a wonder-child, whose

advent had been foretold ages before. Three elements combined to bring about his birth: the Glory, the Guardian Spirit, and the Material Essence, and this began with the birth of his mother, Dughdhova. In the Pahlavi texts—the *Dinkard* and the *Zad-Sparam*—the tale is told in this wise:

About the glory of Zaratust (Zarathushtra) becoming manifest even before his birth, it is thus declared that . . . when Freno gave birth to the mother of Zaratust, whom they called Dughdhova, It came down from the endless Light, in the manner of fire, and mingled with the fire which was before her; and from the fire It mingled with the mother of Zaratust.

For three nights it was manifest to all passers-by as a species of fire in the direction of the house, and passers on the road always saw great radiance.

Also when she became fifteen years old, the radiance of that glory which was in her, was even such that, on the path she was walking along, its brightness was then shed by her.

And it is declared that the demons, on account of their defeat by that Glory in maintaining adversity for the girl, were bringing on to that district three armaments, winter, the demon of pestilence, and oppressive enemies; and a suspicion was cast by them into the minds of those of the district, that this harm happened to the district owing to the witchcraft of this girl; so that those of the district quarreled dreadfully with the parents as to the witchcraft of antagonism in the girl, and about putting her out from that district.

And the father of that girl spoke even these words to those of the district, with much reason, about the unjust assertion of witchcraft relative to the girl, that is: "When this girl was brought forth among those of mine, her whole destiny was afterwards set forth by that manifest radiance of fire

where it brought out radiance from all over her in the dark night. . . . One is dazzled by the radiance from her body, and that of a wizard would not have been so glorious."

Even then, owing to the influence of the demons, and the Kavig and Karap (idolatrous priests) of the district, they did not become satisfied; so the father ordered the girl to go to Padiragtaraspo, the father of a family in the country of the Spitamas, in the district of Alak; and the girl obeyed the command of her father. That disturbance which the demons caused, with evil intention, for the expatriation of that girl, the sacred Beings assiduously made the reason for the coming of the girl for marriage to Porushaspo, the father of Zaratust, through her father sending the girl to the dwelling of Padiragtaraspo, the father of Porushaspo.

We come now to the mingling of the Glory with the other two elements mentioned before—the Guardian Spirit and the Material Essence—the three constituting the holy triad. The Guardian Spirit is transported to earth by two archangels, who bear it in the stem of the Hom-plant, the height of a man. This ultimately is given by these two seraphic messengers to Porushaspo, who places it in his wife's keeping. The Material Essence is manifested through water and plants combined with miraculous milk from virgin cows, which is mixed with the Hom-plant. Or, as it is recounted in the *Dinkard*:

It is declared that afterwards Porushaspo asked again for that Hom from Dughdhova, and he pounded it, and with that cows' milk into which the nature of the body of Zaratust had come, he here mingled the guardian Spirit of Zaratust, and the nature of the body came at once into union with it.

One marvel is this which is declared, that Porushaspo and Dughdhova drank up that Hom and milk when they were

mingled together and announced to Ahura Mazda; and here occurred a combination of the Glory, Guardian Spirit, and Bodily Nature of Zaratust into a manchild.

Zarathushtra's birth is heralded by supernatural signs. A star appears, a comet blazes forth, the earth is shaken. All nature rejoices, and all living things, even down to the trees and rivers, thrill with joy. On the other hand, the ever-active demons strive mightily to prevent Zarathushtra's coming, and to overthrow him after his arrival. The mother has strange dreams. She sees her son attacked by ravening beasts, but he drives them away, and an astrologer tells her that this presages a marvelous career for her unborn child. We shall let the *Dinkard* carry on the story:

One marvel is this which is declared that, after the combination of Zaratust in the womb of his mother, the demons strove anew wonderfully to cause the death of Zaratust in his mother's womb, and she who bore him was rendered sickly by them through the sharpest of sharp and afflictive pain, until she wished to ask the wizard physician for a desirable remedy. And here is manifested a great wonder, just as revelation says: "It is then a voice of theirs is carried away there to her from the higher region, from Ahuramazd and from the archangels thus: 'Thou damsel who goest! do not proceed thither, because anything of theirs is destruction through wiazrd medical treatment; for healthfulness wash thy hands thoroughly, and those hands shall take firewood, and upon it thou shalt offer meat for the sake of the infant; thou shalt offer up cows' butter to the fire for his sake; thou shalt likewise heat it at the fire for his sake, and shall quaff it off at the proper time for his sake, and thou wilt become well.' " Then at once that damsel washed her hands thoroughly, and she did just as she had heard, and became well.

One marvel is this which was manifested to the multitude

when three days remained to his coming forth, in the manner of the sun at the approach of its uprising, when its first advancing twilight is diffused, his body is then announced, as revelation says: "It is then when in those last three nights during which Zaratust was in the womb, where he still subsisted three days till afterwards born, that the village of Porushaspo became all luminous. Then spoke the horse-owners and cattle-owners of the Spitamas, in running away, thus: 'It is requisite to be forgiven; the village of Porushaspo, on which that fire is in every crevice, is disturbed by confusion.' Then, on running together again, they said: 'It is not fully forgiven for the village of Porushaspo; fire is on it in every crevice and it is disturbed by confusion; unto him is born at his house a brilliant manchild.' "

One marvel is this which is declared, that on being born he laughed outright. The seven midwives who sat around him were quite frightened thereby; and those terrified ones spoke thus: "What was this, on account of grandeur or contempt when, like the worthy man whose pleasure is due to activity, the man's child so laughs at the birth owing to him?" Porushaspo also spoke thus: "Bring out that manchild to the sheepskin clothing which is soft; the affair was owing to thee, owing to the virtue of thee who art Dughdhova, that the advent of glory and coming of radiance to this manchild was openly seen when he laughed outright at his birth."

In addition to this laughter, Pliny tells us that the child's brain throbbed so violently as to repel the hand laid upon his head.

The eternal struggle between good and evil, which is the very core of Zarathushtra's teaching, is exemplified in his perpetual struggle with the demons and wicked magicians, the chief of whom, Durasrobo and his wicked accomplice,

Bratrok-resh, contrive in every way to put an end to his life. Right after his birth Durasrobo strives to crush the head of the infant, but the hands—or paws, as they are called in the scripture—are instantly shriveled. Worst of all, Porushaspo's mind is poisoned against his own son, so that he works with the wizard to destroy him. They place the child at night in the midst of firewood, with the intention of igniting it, but, in the words of the *Dinkard: On rushed at dawn that son-loving mother, and she came forth to him intelligently, and seizing him, thereby removed him with her right hand aloft as he sat.*

In like manner she rescues him from the feet of oxen, and from the hoofs of horses. When the magician, in collusion with the father, places Zarathushtra in a wolf's den, the wolf fails to harm him, and does not even touch a sheep that comes to suckle him. When the son-loving mother rushes there at dawn, expecting to find only bones, instead there is her divine child alive and smiling. Grasping him in her arms, she declares: *I will not give thee to any one during life, not though both the provinces of Ragh and Nodar should arrive here together!*

Duresrobo is finally destroyed by the young Zarathushtra. The *Zad-Sparam* gives the account as follows:

This also is declared, that one day Duresrobo, the Karap . . . came out to the house of Porushaspo; and Porushaspo placed a bowl of mare's milk before him, and spoke to him thus: "Consecrate it."

Zaratust expostulated with Porushaspo thus: "I will consecrate it." Porushaspo spoke thus: "He should consecrate, and the grace is to be offered up by you;" and as many as three times they mutually disputed.

Then up stood Zaratust, and his right foot struck at the bowl and emptied it, and he spoke thus: "I reverence

righteousness, I reverence the righteous and the poor, men and women; do thou, O Porushaspo! prepare a portion for him in whom there is worthiness."

And Duresrobo spoke unto Zaratust thus: "As some of my portion of daily food was first thrown away by thee, it is I who will bring it on both thy lives, and will utterly destroy thee." Zaratust spoke interruptingly thus: "With complete mindfulness I will look upon thee with both eyes, and will utterly destroy thee."

And, for a long time, they constantly looked, one at the other, with unshrinking gaze; but the divine nature of Zaratust is victorious over the witchcraft of that wizard, and Duresrobo is further disturbed; he also asked for his horse and spoke thus: "On account of this boy, it is impossible for me to stay."

He sat upon the horse, and when he had gone a little way, he fell off from the horse, through severe distress, and died.

Thus, throughout his life, Zarathushtra was the symbol of the victory of light over darkness, of truth over falsehood. A picture of him is given to us in the *Dasatir* or Sacred Writings of the Ancient Persian Prophets:

It is said that when the fame of the excellence of the nature of Zaratust had spread all over the world . . . the wise men of Yunan selected a sage named Tutianush—who at that time had the superiority in acquirements over them all—to go to Iran and to enquire of Zaratust concerning the real nature of things. If he was puzzled and unable to answer, he could be no real prophet; but if he returned an answer, he was a speaker of truth. When the Yunani Sage arrived at Balkh, Gushtas appointed a proper day on which the mobeds of every country should assemble; and a golden chair was placed for the Yunani Sage. Then the beloved of Yezdan, the prophet Zaratust, advanced into the midst of the

assembly. The Yunani Sage on seeing that chief said, "This form and this gait cannot lie, and nought but truth can proceed from them." He then asked the day of the prophet's nativity. The prophet of God told it. He said, "On such a day, and under such a fortunate star, a deceiver cannot be born."

REPORT

ANANDA-ASHRAMA OF CALIFORNIA

Before daybreak, April 20th! Air, soft, and warm as with the breath of summer! Hills in their robes of quietness, waiting for the light! Behind and beyond them, infinite darkness, set with great, luminous stars! Then, almost imperceptible at first, a paling in the east, which gradually warmed into a sea of living, throbbing color. Finally the rising sun, the risen Son, and a paean of praise—music and prayer—from a hundred mountain altars, from ten thousand human hearts!

So Easter dawned in the California Southland.

At Ananda-Ashrama, the Sunrise Terrace, created and dedicated the Easter before, had been made more spacious under Swami Paramananda's direction; trees had been transplanted there from other parts of the property, and an altar had been placed against the background of far-flung valleys and the sunrise. Upon it, stood a great cross of immortelles, in the centre of which shone forth the Word, the OM; and, at its base, glowed lovely roses and pure ascension lilies.

For once, the Lord found the world awake at His dawning. When the Swami silently took his place, every seat was filled, hundreds having defied sleep in order to be present. With deep attention, they listened to his words which seemed to embody the simplicity, profundity, and radiant loveliness

of the place, the hour, and the day. Over all hearts, more than the spell of Nature, lay the spell of God.

In addition to the many who came long distances in the early hours, a large number of guests filled the Guest-House to overflowing. Both there and at the Cloister, a breakfast was served immediately following the Service, and a luncheon at the close of the eleven o'clock Service, which was held in the Temple of the Universal Spirit, where the Swami likewise conducted another Service in the afternoon at three o'clock. All through the day, cars climbed the hill, and every hour brought its votaries.

April 26th was also noteworthy, being the anniversary of the founding of the Ashrama. Special musical programs were given for both morning and afternoon services, and the Swami restated, to the many friends who came, the ideals of love, tolerance, and universality which had inspired, and were inspiring the work.

VEDANTA CENTRE OF BOSTON

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston, during Swami Paramananda's absence, all Services and Classes were as usual conducted by Srimati Charushila Devi. There, as at the Ashrama, the outstanding event was Easter. Devoted friends of the Centre flocked to the Boston Temple of the Universal Spirit in goodly numbers both for the morning and evening Services. Very special music—violin, 'cello, song, piano—created a profound atmosphere of worship, while lovely flowers, massed on the altar and the surrounding platform, spoke with their fragrance and color of the perpetual miracle of life. Srimati Charushila Devi had as her theme, "I have seen the Lord!" and poured from her heart her vision of the Resurrection, interpreting it for all present in a fresh and living way.

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VOLUME XIX NUMBER 6

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

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JUNE, 1930

Simplicity of Living

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
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SIMPLICITY OF LIVING

By Swami Paramananda

SIMPLICITY of living—what does it mean? Let me try to sum it up. It means primarily simplified thought. How many of us can think in a single line? How many of us—even among those who have an innate sense of the value of simplicity—are content to cultivate habits which would enable us to throw off the weight of life we are now carrying? Mountain climbers give us a wonderful example of this. They have to simplify through necessity; with them it is a science. The little bundle they bear contains only what is absolutely necessary—no extra burden, no weight. Same way, we should seek to free ourselves from ostentation, glamor, and all the fictitious demands. How much time we waste on non-essentials! We must cultivate simplicity in our daily living, for it is from our habits of every day that we build up our spiritual habits.

Do not think for a moment that anyone becomes great, spiritually or mentally, through accident. We grow just as a flower unfolds, in a natural way. The bud cannot be forced to open its petals. Our life has its season, its appointed hour for blossoming, but it is for us to fulfil all the requirements, and simplicity is one of them. Simplicity means health; simplicity means preservation of body and mind; sim-

plicity means saving of time and energy. The war imposed on us certain simple habits of diet and of home-living, and we were better for them. At that time, however, we adopted them because we were forced to do so. How much better it would have been if we could have taken them up from a sense of spiritual values!

A clergyman friend of mine came one time to visit me in Boston. During some discussion the question of vegetarian diet arose. "I am a vegetarian," he said, "but I do not want you to think that it is out of any pity for animal life; it is because it gives me greater faculty for thinking." Here is revealed a strange type of fear and superstition. The gentleman did not want anyone to go away with the idea that his form of diet was due to a magnanimous spirit or to purity of purpose; his mind was not clear, that was all, the vegetarianism was an essential factor in clearing it. Even this shows the value of simplified habits, yet how much more potent such habits become when they have spiritual relationship, when you do something, not because of what it may mean to you in your success or achievement, but because of what it may mean to a larger world. Whenever we are able to save our energy, our time, our capabilities, through more simple living we not only unfold and preserve our own life, we do something for the lives of others.

The greatest men are always simple; that is my observation. I cannot imagine a truly great man, with spiritual insight and inspiration, speaking in such a manner that one cannot understand him. His utterance is direct and to the point. A man like this, a child can grasp his meaning. Whatever he says is clarified; it requires no commentary. This, however, is not true of the majority of people. One of our Hindu saints used to say humorously, that though man can go in a direct line, he prefers the roundabout way. His mind

has become so twisted that he desires what is complex. Many of our miseries come just from this.

In our mad exuberance always we are trying to go against the current. It is like using our strength to stop a locomotive; we cannot do it; it will only break us. Yet that same strength intelligently applied will enable us to operate the locomotive, so that it will carry us. This power of control is what we find in people whose intelligence, instead of causing them to be complex in their habits, gives them a clean cut mind, and purity of intention.

"For our rejoicing in this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshy wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had conversation in the world, and more abundantly toward you." These are the words of St. Paul to his people. If we observe we shall note that those who in our opinion are not so intellectual, who do not carry a burden of what the world calls equipment, but who rather carry simple faith, it is such men who possess the grace of God.

Perhaps I am treading on difficult ground. We are living in an age of rationalism; why should we believe? But rationalism is not to destroy. Our intellectual faculties, if they tear down everything so that we have nothing to stand upon, are misapplied. The purpose of the intellect is not to leave us stranded, but to give us the power of investigation, of finding and discarding all that is non-essential to our purpose or detrimental in our life. Therefore we must be careful not to apply the name "rationalism" to that which makes us critical, doubtful, and destructive.

Let us take the people we love and admire most—not Christ or Buddha or the other great Master-Spirits, but the people immediately around us—and see what their way of expression is. We shall find the utmost simplicity of habit,

and also humility. What is this humility? It is the attitude of the man who realizes more and more the infinitude of God; of one who does not—as Swami Vivekananda used to say—try to measure the sky with a tape measure. There are within us qualities which we can all unfold—qualities of spiritual faith, of inner vision. We are taught, not only in one Bible but in all the great Bibles, that we are part of the Divine Essence, that we are really immortal children of Divinity. A skeptical, calculating man will begin at once to analyze this concept and will keep on analyzing it until he gets himself into the state of mind where he cannot accept it. A simple soul, on the other hand, will find his access to that Light with comparative quickness.

I know that I may be opening myself to a certain amount of criticism. You may say, "He is teaching old-fashioned religion." It is not a question of fashion. There is a round-about way of getting at things, and there is a direct, simple way. The thing is, we must have a sense of values, a sense of proportion. Today, modern psychology teaches us to speak of this one or that one as having a complex. No one needs to have such a thing. Mind creates it, and mind has the power instantly to destroy it. When this mind of ours is bathed and refreshed in the water of understanding, nothing can cling to it, all burdens roll off, and we go to our rest like little children—relaxed, without a worry.

I shall always remain ignorant, that Thou,
all-wise One, may ever guide me;
I shall always remain a helpless child,
that Thou, mighty Spirit of the Universe, may ever protect me.
I thank my fate that keeps me ignorant of
many things, so I may know naught else
but One.

I bless my fate that keeps me ungrown, so I
may cling to Thee alone.

Is not this the Christ picture? Christ did not pray to be preserved or protected; He was completely surrendered. Whenever praise or honor was brought to Him, He did not accept it; He offered it all to His Father in Heaven.

In ancient times, the great Indo-Aryan teachers spoke of That, by knowing which everything else becomes known. Now, if there is such a knowledge, the way to it is the way of one-pointedness, by means of which we can simplify our whole life. We cannot study every detail, every particle, every atom, in the universe—that is impossible—but we can seek that Essence; it is in the province of man to do so; but it necessitates making the mind one-pointed, the habits simple.

We carry a great deal of weight unnecessarily. In Boston, the first winter I was there, people often used to ask me to change the day or the hour of my Classes. They would say, "Won't you change from Tuesday to Wednesday so we can all come?" and always I tried to do so, because my one desire was to benefit. Then, on a certain day, quite spontaneously, one of the ladies told me that the reason she could not come was because she had an engagement for a card party. It was a revelation. After that I found that almost invariably when I was asked to change it was because of something non-essential.

How often we fool ourselves! We say, "I haven't the time to give myself to God; my life is crowded." Crowded with what? It will be of the greatest benefit to us if we can sincerely ask ourselves this question. Is there anything we can eliminate so that there will not be such weight upon our shoulders, upon our time and strength? Practically everyone is interested in self-preservation, in enhancing his life and its expression. Let him then follow the Law which governs this.

We can think in such a way that through our thought we shall unfold and increase our strength; we can live in such a way that we do not wear ourselves out, but, on the contrary, we gain always new impetus by our life and actions. I do not say this with any uncertainty—I know that it is so. What others have done, we can do. There are people who work arduously, with, however, so pure a motive—a motive so fixed, so one-pointed, and simplified—that their activity, instead of depleting them, causes them to feel revived. I have myself experienced this many, many times. The thing is, we allow ourselves to be distracted and scattered. We are very far from keeping our mind wholly fixed on the goal of our effort. Christ said: "Let your eye be single." This singleness Hindus call *Ekagra*, one-pointedness. A man who would have full measure of realization, let him be one-pointed; let him not be scattered. Even from the standpoint of ordinary happiness, simplicity of living is needful. Those who are over-weighted by non-essentials do not find a great deal of enjoyment in life, whereas those with simpler habits have more time for study, for recreation, even for their pleasures. This is a law that governs everywhere—in our physical life, and also in our spiritual destiny.

Someone fired with enthusiasm here may say, "I am going to get rid of everything I possess!" It does not matter how much we have or how little, we shall never succeed in simplifying so long as our mind is complex. It is the mind that we have to cleanse. Why should we store up in our memory things that are disagreeable or harmful? For instance, someone has done us an injury, and though we may not want to think of that person, yet, through our anger or our hatred, he becomes a dominating factor in our mind. It is all because we have lost simplicity of habit. You may wonder what simplicity has to do with it. Wise men do not dwell on evil, nor

do they resist it. Their measure of non-resistance, however, does not lie in folding their hands and letting evil over-run them—not that! They create such a counter-force of good, lovingness, and light, that evil is overcome. It is conquered by their strength, and this strength they have gained through learning the way of simplicity, the way of one-pointedness. In their hour of agony, instead of thinking of that which is causing their agony, they think of That which is beyond agony. When they are met by failure, instead of thinking of that which has brought about their failure, they think of That which stands above all sting, all lack, all despondency, all misery, and all defeat. This was the way of the Christ and the Buddha, and other great and illumined souls. What they were able to prove by their own life and example we can acquire, because, first and last, we are an essential part of the One—the Absolute—the Infinite. This is a simple fact, is it not? But can we remember to cling to it? The trouble is, our life does not permit us to do so. It makes us aware of our defects, of our hands, and feet, and mind, and brain, and of our surroundings. It overwhelms us with material consciousness, and that is always a complex consciousness. Those who seek to rise by material grandeur find that the weight is too great; they cannot carry it. There is no one who can carry matter with him. When a man passes out of this life, what does he take? Only that which is unseen, which partakes of the Spirit—his character, his insight, his spiritual strength. That is why we should pay heed to the unfoldment of these fundamental principles.

It is for us to make our life what we should like to have it. There may be within us a tremendous accumulation of rubbish throwing its weight upon us, but this can be burnt up in the fire of wisdom; a little of that fire will reduce it all to ashes. Instead of feeling, "This great wisdom is not for me; I am too

weak, too miserable, not equipped enough or sufficiently intellectual," let us, in simple, direct way, reach out for that One who has given us Light. Why should we not trust in Him?

There is nothing so tragic as for a man to lose his faith. No matter what religion you may profess, if you do not have that living, radiant faith, you have no saving grace. To find it, you must go within; you must simplify your life. The thousand self-created fetters which bind you—break them instantly! Know that your spirit is invincible. Whatever makes you doubt that—forsake it! Remove from your mind all elements of suspicion, doubt, and despondency, so that you can breathe freely, and think with clean consciousness. This is what leads to wisdom. When water flows through a clean mouthpiece, how refreshing it is! But the same water coming through an unclean channel is not fit to drink. So it is with us. One Light flows through us all, but when it passes through an impure mind, it seems confused and wavering, and we are bewildered by the shadows that are cast. When, however, it shines through a mind and heart that are simple, pure, and free, it inspires all who come in contact with it, even those who are despondent and faint-hearted. In that Light, their darkness vanishes, and their doubts gradually die away.

There is something chaotic yet complete, which existed before heaven and earth. Oh, how still it is, formless, standing alone and suffering no change, reaching everywhere, exhausted never! It may be regarded as the Mother of the Universe. Its name I know not. To designate it, I call it Tao . . . . Tao produceth all things; its virtue nourisheth them; its nature giveth them form; its force doth perfect them. . . . Production without possession, action without aggression, development without domination, this is its mysterious operation.

—*Lao Tzu.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Knowest thou what I see? I see Him as all. Man and other creatures, they appear as veritable figures skin-bound, with the Lord within—shaking the head or moving the hands and feet! I had once a like perception: One Substance, I felt, had taken the forms of the Cosmos with all living creatures—like a house of wax, with gardens, roads, men, cows, and the rest, all made of wax and nothing but wax!

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

At the very moment when psychology is attempting by every prestidigitation to get rid of consciousness in order to reduce mind to matter, physics regrets to report that matter does not exist.

—*Dr. Will Durant.*

The valuation of life and all its nobler expressions can only come out of the soul's yearning toward its own destiny. Every attempt to reduce ethics to scientific formulas must fail.

—*Dr. Albert Einstein.*

He makes the inner and outer worlds to be indivisibly one;
The conscious and the unconscious both are His footstools.

—*Kabir.*

We cannot think of something of God here and something else there, nor of all God gathered at some one spot; there is an instantaneous presence everywhere.

—*Plotinus.*

The events of nature, the creation of stellar systems and revolution of planets around the sun, are all the result of the operations of the mind of the spirit of space. They are the thoughts of God.

—*Prof. Raymond Dodge.*

MATTER, LIFE AND MIND

By Will Durant, Ph.D.

(An excerpt from his work, "Mansions of Philosophy," published by Simon and Schuster, New York.)

"Physical science," says Bertrand Russell, "is approaching the stage when it will be complete." The evidence is all to the contrary. According to Henri Poincaré, modern physics is in a state of chaos, reconstructing all its bases, and meanwhile hardly knowing where it stands. The fundamental ideas of physics have completely changed in the last twenty years, in regard to both matter and motion. . . . La Place envied Newton for having found "the" system of the world, and mourned that there were no other systems to discover. But the Newtonian world is all awry now; gravitation is no longer a matter of "attraction," and the "laws" of motion have been wrenched in every direction by the theory of relativity. Once philosophy dealt with "shadows" and abstractions, and science dealt with substance, the "concrete," and matter of fact realities; now physics is an esoteric mass of abstract formulas, and "in the scientific world the concept of substance is wholly lacking."[1] Philosophy was to be set aside (some people still predict its death "within fifty years") while science was to solve our problem; now, just at a time when the man in the street is transferring to science and scientists all the notions of inspiration and infallibility that were once attached to the Bible and the Church, we are modestly informed that "scientific investigation does not lead to knowledge of the intrinsic nature of things."[2] Instead, we are told that a clock goes faster according to the speed with which it is carried through space, and that a ruler

[1]Eddington, p. 274.
[2]Ibid.

can be lengthened by the simple process of changing its position from a right angle to a straight line with the direction of the earth's motion. We must be humble in the face of the unintelligible formulas which have replaced the ancient clarity of physics; who knows but they may be correct? However, one suspects a science that grows more erudite from day to day, and every day refutes its yesterday; that offers us atoms, and then electrons, and then quanta, and at last a holy picture of a material world miraculously built out of electric charges having no material nuclei. Spengler alone has the courage to call this what it is: "every atomic theory is a myth, and not an experience."

Let us be on our guard against theology wherever we find it, even when we come upon it in the "exact" sciences. Probably matter continues to exist despite our shifty omniscience; and the stone that encountered Dr. Johnson's toe was at least as real as his pain. It is true that the stone, for the Doctor, was but a "bundle of perceptions," as Hume was to describe it; but then that sort of a bundle—that obstreperous resistance to our muscles and our senses—is just what we mean by matter. We may indulge ourselves in the new scholasticism of science, but in actual life we shall expect to find all energy associated with matter, with something spatial and ponderable, "something not ourselves, that makes for" sensations.

What that matter is, we do not yet know; and let us say so unmistakably. But one thing is certain—that this attenuated matter is not the old inert matter of the nineteenth-century science; it is the form and vehicle of incalculable energies. It is alive with cohesions, affinities, repulsions, electrolytic and osmotic processes, heat and electricity and leaping light, and the restless dance of electrons. Movement, energy, vitality are everywhere; we no longer dare call any-

thing lifeless. "A body as rigid in appearance as a block of steel represents simply a state of equilibrium between its own internal energy and the external energies—heat, pressure, etc.—which surround it. . . . When we place our hand near a block of metal, the movement of its molecules is modified."[1] The old simile of Lucretius becomes additionally significant:

> When mighty legions, waging the mimicry of war, fill with their movements all the plain, the glitter of it lifts itself to the sky, and the whole earth gleams with brass, and from below rises the noise of the tramping of men, and the mountains, stricken by the shouting, re-echo the voices to the stars of heaven. . . . And yet there is some spot on the high hills from which all these moving men seem to stand still and merely to shine as a spot of brightness on the plains.

The more we study matter the less we see it as fundamental, the more we perceive it as merely the externality of energy, as our flesh is the outward sign of life and mind. "In respect to 'action,' " says Eddington, "physics has taken the bit in her teeth, and has insisted on recognizing this as the most fundamental thing of all."

A Hindu physicist, Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose, has shown "fatigue" in metals—their inability to continue their normal reactions to certain agents beyond a certain time—and the disappearance of this fatigue after rest; and he has demonstrated the sensitivity of metals to excitants, depressants, and poisons. These experiments have been repeated and verified on three continents.[1] The expression, "the life of matter," meaningless twenty-five years ago, has come into common use. "We now see physicists and chemists groping after biological ideas; the extension of biological concepts to the whole of nature may be much nearer than seemed conceivable even a few years ago."[2] We hear of the "evolution of mat-

[1] Le Bon, pp. 250-1.

ter;" the atom, it seems, is born, develops, loses its vitality, and dies.

This modern physics of energy invites us to reformulate the old problem of materialism vs. spiritualism. Which aspect of the external world is more fundamental—the spatial, extended aspect, which physics once described as "matter," or the activating, moving aspect which we name energy? The answer must be energy; this is the "Unknowable," the "Thing-in-Itself," the "Absolute." Is this energy itself a spatial and extended thing, a material substance? We cannot conceive it so, any more than we can conceive thought to be spatial and material. In the heart of matter, giving it form and power, is something not material, possessed of its own spontaneity and life; and this subtle, hidden and yet always revealed vitality is the final essence of everything that we know.

But these words, "heart" and "in," are metaphors, beckoning us into a blind alley; we must not let ourselves think of energy as something distinct from matter, and dwelling in it as the mercury lurked in the statues of Daedalus to give them stability and apparent life. This vital element, this activating energy, is not, as most vitalists think, a separate entity, divorcible from matter; it is inextricably bound up with it, as mind is with body, and forms with matter the inward and outward aspects of one indivisible whole. In a large sense the materialist is right; what he meant to do, by exalting matter, was to express his faith that there is no break in the continuity of development, that philosophers have descended from apes, and apes from protozoa, and these supposedly inorganic substances, and these from the simplest atoms. But we cannot believe this unless we also believe that within the apparently inert body of matter (the spatial metaphor steals in again) there is a principle of life, a power

[2] J. S. Haldane, "Mechanism, Life and Personality," p. 101.

compelling evolution. We bridge the gap between matter and mind not by reducing mind but by raising matter. The world is as the materialist thought, one world, every particle of it materially formed; but throughout every particle of that material world there works a spontaneous energy which is the analogue and promise of life and mind. We may say of the dullest clod what Heraclitus said when he received distinguished visitors into his prosaic and primitive kitchen. "Come," he told them, "enter; for here, too, there are gods."

AN INDIAN MASTER-MIND*

By Waldemar Kaempffert

(Concluded)

If metals seem to live, what may not be expected of vegetables? The next step was clearly the testing of plants, commonly regarded as so low a form of organic life that they are supposed to be nearly devoid of sensation and only crudely responsive to light and heat. Bose approached his new, self-appointed task with an Indian's religious, poetic regard for vegetation, yet with a Western scientist's cool objectivity. The domain of plant physiology was to be explored by one who had made not plants but physics his life-study. If a mechanical engineer were to study surgery purely from an engineer's point of view, a parallel would be found for Bose's investigation of plant response by physical methods.

First he had to invent new instruments which would record plant movements—instruments which are but pens with which petal, stem and leaf may write down a story of joy or suffering, of life and death, a story told in a hieroglyphic script, but a script that a physicist can understand. Indians are not supposed to be inventive, but Bose's instruments are

*Reprinted from "Asia", March, 1923, by the courteous permission of the editors.

of a delicacy and precision, of an ingenuity and simplicity, difficult to match in the West. They were devised under difficulties that would have daunted one who lacked his boundless enthusiasm, tireless perseverence and devotion to an ideal, and they were fashioned for the most part with his own hands or under his eye by simple Indian tinsmiths and craftsmen. They bear subtly suggestive names such as "death recorder," "resonant recorder," "oscillating recorder," "crescograph" (growth recorder).

With these instuments he made plants tell tales touchingly human if we interpret them anthropomorphically. If we consider them merely as combinations of levers, clock-driven recording drums, mirrors and electromagnets, the instruments prove to be measures of highly magnified imperceptible movements—twitches, starts, tremors, languishing depressions, and joyous spreading of fibers.

The tales that plants tell with the aid of these means of expression almost surpass belief; yet the scientific record is indisputable. Bose pinches a carrot with a pair of tweezers. An electric shudder courses through the carrot's flesh. To the eye the shudder is unnoticeable. But the recording instrument magnifies the imperceptible spasm thousands of times, by means of a mirror which sends a beam of light upon a screen or wall. So profound is the shock to the carrot that the beam swings a full eight feet—an ocular evidence of pain that made vegetarian Bernard Shaw exceedingly unhappy when he saw it in London a few years ago.

There is abundant evidence that plants have rudimentary nerves, and that they vary in "nervousness." The unexpected slamming of a door, the blast of a siren, the squeal of a slate-pencil will set many of us on edge; others will placidly read a newspaper, and pay but little attention to the irritation. So it is with plants. Some are as restive as

thoroughbred horse; others are phlegmatic; all are "nervous" more or less. Some are startled only by a strong shock; some like *Mimosa,* quiver at the slightest disturbance. More than one popular delusion disappears when plants are tested. For instance, carbonic acid gas is supposed to be good for vegetation; but Bose chokes plants to death with the gas. The trees in our streets toss their foliage in the wind as bravely as if they were in a forest. Give them Bose's instruments and they record the misery they suffer in the vitiated atmosphere that they must breathe. Again and again, indeed, their response seems "human." So sensitive are they to light that even the passing of a cloud has a fleeting, but measurable, depressive effect. Drug them with chloroform, and they drop off into complete insensibility. Dose them with alcohol, and they scrawl a drunken record. Castigate them with periodically delivered blows, and they complain of exhaustion as unmistakably as if they shrieked for mercy. Wound them, and they are paralyzed.

Even for the rhythmic beating of the heart, Bose finds a counterpart in vegetation. There is the telegraph-plant, for example—common enough in India. Its leaflets move up and down in regular pulsations. Bose places the plant in an atmosphere of ether. Just as the heart slows down under the influence of an anesthetic, so the leaflets beat less perceptibly. A whiff of fresh air, and the pulsations are gratefully resumed; the revival is traced on the record made by the plant itself. Too much ether kills the plant, just as it kills a human being. And the nerve itself? That is found to be the core of a bundle of fiber, such as leaf-stalk. The different parts of a plant prove to be connected by conducting threads, so that the tremor of excitation courses through the whole structure.

There is a night position and a day position in the attitude assumed by vegetation. Some flowers and leaves open in sun-

light, and close after dusk; others unfold only after the sun has set. Do plants sleep? Have they their waking moments? Bose gives a water-lily, a *Nymphaea,* a pen, and bids it write its experience. Translated into human terms, the record runs partly thus:

"Night falls. It is growing colder. Both sides of my petals are growing, but the outer side grows more rapidly, because it is more sensitive to temperature. With increasing coldness, the outer side of my petals grows more slowly than the inner side. Hence the petals warp, and this warping you see as an opening of the flower. The sun rises. I drink in the warmth. Now my petals warp in the opposite direction, and so they gradually close."

Thus Bose questions plant after plant and finds that variations in temperature and light explain what seems to be sleep. There is a difference in excitability as temperature and light vary, and to this extent the correspondence with animal sleep is complete.

With his crescographs, or growth recorders, Bose magnifies plant movements thousands and even millions of times. Growth is made to appear an almost alarming, rushing, pulsating movement, exaggerated to terrifying dimensions by a beam of light falling upon a wall-screen in the lecture-room or laboratory. Water is dropped on the plant: the light slows down and stops; growth has been arrested. The plant is warmed: lethargy is removed; stem and leaf grow again, as the rushing of the light on the screen proclaims.

Here is an instrument which enables the agriculturist to determine in half an hour the relative values of fertilizers. And yet Bose steadfastly refuses to patent his instruments, although many of them lend themselves to commercial exploitation. He tries to explain, but few understand. In England and America, hard-headed business men simply

shook their heads when he said that life must be sacrificial if something remotely like perfection of the soul is to be attained in this sordid world. No wonder his disciples in India regard him as a modern *rishi,* who teaches the ideals that prevailed centuries ago, and who teaches all who may care to listen.

That every plant dies, we know. But at what moment does it throb its last? In an animal, the extinction of life is accompanied by a marked death-spasm. Bose is the first man who has watched a plant in its death-throes, the first man to note the exact moment when it is possible to say, "This flower, this tree is dead." With his "death recorder" he gives the plant the means of indicating when it is about to expire. He places the plant in an inner vessel of water, and this in turn in an outer vessel of water. The arrangement resembles somewhat the double-boiler in which we cook cereals. The outer vessel of water is gradually heated. A curve is traced on a smoked glass plate by the plant itself. Thirty degress, forty degrees, fifty degrees centigrade is indicated on the plate. The temperature rises and rises. Suddenly the curve shoots up. It is the death-spasm. Sixty degrees(a hundred and forty degrees Fahrenheit)the record reads. That this is indeed the quiver of death is proved by fruitless attempts to revive the plant, and by its utter failure to write further answers to questioning shocks. The experiment is fascinating for its mere dramatic effect, apart from its scientific value.

There is an electric spasm of death corresponding with this purely physical spasm. The electromotive force developed at death may be considerable—as much as a volt. Five hundred peas suitably arranged in series would exert an electrical pressure of five hundred volts at death. "It is well that the cook does not know the danger she runs," comments Bose

dryly. "Fortunately peas are not arranged in series of five hundred."

He tests every square inch of a plant, and he finds that some spots are more irritable than others. Here and there is a colored area or stripe from which no response can be evoked. Now we begin to realize the meaning of the strange, sometimes beautiful, color-transformations that follow blight and frost and disease. The sudden paling of the passion flower—what is it but the pallor of death? And the variegated hues of blossoms growing on the same stem—no longer are they inexplicable; they are a dying glory of color. What we have admired in many a beautiful leaf and flower is but a cadaverous beauty. All the wondrous, mysterious purple and red glow of autumn is but the flush of death.

So this Indian who synthesizes the teachings of his fathers with the revelations of modern scientific research finds that every fiber in a green, apparently sluggish mass of foliage is instinct with sensibility. He painstakingly records the throbs of its pulsating life; he watches its death-spasm; he proves its nervous excitability by drugging it as a biologist would drug an animal; he makes every vein in a leaf write down its life-tremors; and he comes away with a feeling of awe rather than of exultation. Flowers and plants cease to be merely a few clustered petals, a few green leaves growing from a woody stem. They are man's organic kin. Thus this scientist's researches confirm not only old Vedantic teachings, but the deep, world-wide, philosophic conviction that beneath the chaotic, bewildering diversity of nature there is an underlying unity. There is but one kind of matter, whether it be a complex man or a clod.

Delicate tests of plant irritability, startling evidences of something in a plant akin to human sensations, have had a profound effect on Bose. The agonizing records of plant

pain, the buoyant script in which petal and leaf convey their elation when refreshed with ozone, stir in him the reverence that every religious Indian feels when he contemplates the mystery of life as it is unfolded in the jungle around him. There is a pathos in the records to which Bose is not blind. At the close of one of his Royal Institution addresses, after he had shown the complete similarity between the response of apparently dead metals, plants, and muscles, he poetically uttered the conclusion at which he had arrived:

"It was when I came upon the mute witness of these self-made records, and perceived in them one phase of a pervading unity that bears within it all things: the mote that quivers in ripples of light, the teeming life upon our earth, and the radiant suns that shine above us—it was then that I understood for the first time a little of that message proclaimed by my ancestors on the banks of the Ganges thirty centuries ago: 'They who see but one in all the changing manifestations of this universe, unto them belongs Eternal Truth—unto none else, unto none else.' "

THE ONE AND THE MANY

Yoga-Vasistha Maharamayana

It was the Mind that formed the world from its thought; wherefore the phenomenal is neither a substance by itself; nor is it nothing.

The mind is part of the body, and spreads itself in its thoughts and desires into many forms, as the branch of a tree shoots forth in its blossoms and leaves. And as we see two moons by optical deception, so does one mind appear as many in many individuals.

It is from the variety of its desires that the mind perceives and produces varieties of things, as pots and pictures and the like.

The one mind thinks itself as many, by the diversity of its thoughts, such as: "I am weak; I am poor; I am ignorant, and the like."

The thought that I am none of the fancied forms which I feign to myself, but of that Form from whence I am, causes the mind to be one with the everlasting Brahma, by divesting it of the thoughts of all other things.

All things springing from Brahma sink at last in Him, as the huge waves of the vast and billowy ocean rise but to subside in its calm and undisturbed waters below.

They sink in the Supreme Spirit, resembling one vast body of pure and transparent, cold and sweet water; and like a vast mine of brilliant gems of unfailing luster.

One thinking himself as a little billow diminishes his soul to littleness.

But one believing himself a large wave, enlarges his spirit to greatness.

He who thinks of himself as a little being, and fallen from above to suffer in the nether world, is born upon earth in the form he took for his pattern.

As water is universally the same and transparent in its nature, so is the all-pervading Spirit of God pure and holy in every place.

There is one eternal law that presides over all things, and this one law branches forth into many, bringing forth a hundred varieties of effects.

Both inert and active(matter and life)proceed from the same, and the mind proceeds from the Mind of God. . . .

It is Brahma, therefore, O sinless Rama! that manifests Itself in the visible world, and is full with various forms, as the sea with its billows and surges.

It assumes to Itself all varieties of forms by its volition of evolution, or the will of becoming many; and it is the Spirit

that displays Itself in Itself and by Itself, as the sea water displays its waves in its own water, and by itself.

As the various waves are no other than the sea water, so all these phenomena are not different from the essence of the Lord of the world.

As the same seed develops itself in the various forms of its branches and buds, its twigs and leaves, and its fruits and flowers, so the same Almighty Seed evolves itself in the multifarious varieties of creation.

As the strong sunlight displays itself in variegated colors in different bodies, so does Omnipotence display Itself in various vivid colors, all of which are unreal shades.

As the colorless cloud receives in its bosom the variety of transient hues displayed in the rainbow, so the inscrutable Spirit of the Almighty reflects and refracts the various colors displayed in creation.

From the active agent proceed inert matter and inactivity, without a secondary cause, as the active spider produces the passive thread, and the living man brings upon himself his dull torpor in sleep.

Again the Lord makes the mind to produce matter for its bondage only, as he makes the silkworm weave its own sheathing for its confinement alone.

The mind, of its own will, forgets its spiritual nature, and makes for itself a strong prison-house.

But when the mind inclines to think of its spiritual nature, it gains its release from the spirit-house of the body, and from bondage in the world, as a bird or beast is released from its cage, and the big elephant let loose from its fetters and the tying post.

The mind gradually moulds itself into the form which it constantly thinks upon in itself, and it derives from within itself the power to be what it wishes to become.

FACT AND REALITY

By Sister Daya

It is a strange and rather appalling fact that science, which is emphatically proclaiming the unity of life, and is pointing ever more and more through its discoveries to one common source for all manifestation, is at the same time furnishing mankind with its most terrible weapons for destruction, is devising new gases, new bombs, new horrors to destroy that life which it perceives as one. This only goes to show how wide is the abyss which lies between knowledge of fact and knowledge of Reality.

Were man learning to control the inner forces of his own nature as he is learning to govern the outer forces of the universe, if these two developments could take place simultaneously, then would the human race partake of the blessings of a true civilization—a state in which man, supreme ruler, establishes a kingship which cannot be overthrown by earthquake or storm, by fire or flood or any threat whatsoever. And this means not only external cataclysms but internal as well—the earthquake of doubt, the storm of anger, the fire of passion, the flood of despair and fear.

Under the tutelage of our scientific masters, we had come to associate the real with that which we are pleased to call matter—substance—anything that we could detect with our senses; outside of that all was dream, poetic fancy, or worse still, superstition. But now that matter is dissolving before the eyes of an astonished world, and we are left with nothing more tangible to hold to than charges of electricity in space, we may dare to affirm, "Here, indeed, is magic: that out of one essence this infinite variety should come to be," or put it as the great Indo-Aryan sages on the banks of the Ganges thousands of years ago: Only THAT is real—all else is illusion!

As a matter of fact, for the individual that only is real which he can lay hold of and build into his life and character. In a shipwreck, a man tossed about by giant waves may find that faith in God, or a growing realization of his own immortal nature, will contain for him greater elements of truth than the knowledge that the chemical formula for water is H^2O. The assumed facts around which he builds his faith may have no ultimate foundation, may crumble in a moment of time, but the faith itself, the inner conviction of eternity, may bring him in touch with the Real.

After all, the outer seeking of man can lead but to facts, and facts are only the garment of Truth—the husk enclosing not merely the seed, but that invisible life at the heart of the seed, of which the sage, Uddalaka, said to his son, "My son, that subtle essence which you do not perceive there, of that very essence this great Nyagrodha tree exists. . . . That is the True. That is the Self. And thou, Svetaketu, art That."

Form is the armor of defense which life wears. It is a separating wall which divides us from the inner being of things and people. Yes, that form of the beloved, which we lay aside with tears, is not a means of union, but of separation. And this we shall know in time, when, in the depths of our own soul we shall pursue Reality with the same fervor, the same unshakable determination, the same will to achieve or die that mark our great scientists in their search after facts. Meanwhile we must live, and, somehow, even the most ignorant one among us must struggle with the conflicting elements which disrupt his mental world. He is forced to discover for himself the controlling laws which govern that world, move with them through the jungle of desires to the land of happiness, and reach, through his own inherent strength, the high mountain of peace.

Psychologists may define, and scientists may declare, and it may be very interesting; but when all is said and done, it is we who must meet life, and we who must meet death, by the aid of that character which we have builded. And is it not fair to assume that those qualities which exalt the mind and revivify the body, which cause it to be though weary, not weary, and though weak, not weak—those high qualities of faith, love, purity—are of and from Truth, whereas doubt, impurity, hatred and their kin show by the very weakness which they induce in man how unstable and unreal is their nature?

Though a million scientists should declare man to be an automaton, still would he follow the irresistible urge in his heart which impels him ever on and on in his quest for that which will satisfy utterly and forever the hunger of his soul—the hunger for Truth, God, Love, call it what you will—the hunger that drives the scientist to his laboratory and the religious to his shrine—that will never be satisfied with anything less than the Real. Is there any end to such a search, any fulfilment for such a desire? In this wide world are there not water to quench thirst, sheltered spots to provide rest, love to answer the call of love? Surely, then, in this wider universe there must be that which will allay for all time the hunger and thirst and weariness of the heart, and will answer the cry of the soul.

Let us have faith. Let us trust in the great Laws implanted in our innermost being, observe them, live by them. And let us learn to witness quietly the mighty drama of life. For often the knowledge of today is not the knowledge of tomorrow; the pendulum swings forward and then back, carrying the minds of men with it. But he who is the witness holds the middle point of balance, and his eyes are clear. One moment we are told that matter alone is real; the next mo-

ment, matter is denied, and the invisible is acclaimed as Truth. Truth, however, encompasses all, blends all, and harmonizes all. It is in this spirit of infinite Truth that the great Upanishads declare:

"They fall into blind darkness who worship the Unmanifested, and they fall into greater darkness who worship the manifested. . . . He who knows at the same time both the Unmanifested(the cause of manifestation) and the destructible, or manifested, he crosses over death through knowledge of the destructible, and attains immortality through knowledge of the First Cause. . . .

"What is here(in the visible world), that is there(in the invisible); he who sees difference(between them)goes from death to death."

NEW SCIENCE AND OLD PROBLEMS

*An Interview with Professor Arthur H. Compton**

Professor Arthur H. Compton of the physics department of the University of Chicago, Nobel prize winner of 1927, is to tell the scientific world at Ithaca, N. Y., next month, something new and apparently final about atomic structure, based on fifteen years of studies in X-ray diffraction.

Professor Compton says that he has "stumbled on a result, which is only the starting point for new work." He does not know where it will lead. It may be a torch in the forest of mystery that surrounds the primal forces of the universe. He will not talk about that now.

This question was put to Professor Compton:

"What has science, particularly the new physics, to say about the old problem of free-will, immortality, and God?"

"It has some astonishing things to say." He mentioned

*As reported in "The Times", Los Angeles, California.

first a new "principle of uncertainty," which Professor Heisenberg of the University of Leipzig has announced. It is based on the discoveries in light particles which have made Professor Compton world famous.

The Einstein theory of general relativity, it will be recalled, was also based on work done at Chicago—that of Michelson in the speed of light. This has radically changed conceptions of the universe and of reality.

The Heisenberg-Compton theory takes away the uniformity of the physical world, as taught by the older science, and which is the basis for the so-called mechanistic view of man's consciousness. It leaves room for an effective intelligence behind the phenomena of nature.

"The new physics," Professor Compton says, "admits the possibility of mind acting on matter, and suggests that the thoughts of men are perhaps the most important things in the world. In other words, at the bottom of physical things there is an element of chance, an essential unpredictability, which, translated into the human sphere, throws new light on the evolutionary processes, and gives meaning to human life.

"The physicist has little evidence to support the old evolutionary theory. . . . He cannot see the world of today and mankind developing at random out of atomic chaos. The evidence, he finds, is strongly suggestive of a directive intelligence, a purpose, back of everything. And the goal which he finds reasonable is the creation of intelligent minds."

An English bishop suggested recently that scientists declare a ten year moratorium, so that the theologians might have a chance to catch up with them. Professor Compton thinks it may take this long for some of the new schools of psychology to use what is already accepted in physics, as their conclusions are based on discarded hypotheses. It was Stein-

metz who said that the most important work for scientists during the next fifty years would be concerned with spiritual things.

Professor Compton has no conclusions, based on science, for the question of immortality. Science does not supply a definite answer, but it does say that "biologically speaking, life, whether it be an apple seed or the germ cell of a man, is essentially continuous and eternal."

On the relation between body and mind, he said:

"In some reflex actions and habitual acts we may behave as automata but where deliberation occurs, we feel that we choose our own course. In fact, a certain freedom of choice may, it seems to me, be considered as an experimental fact with which we must reconcile our theories. If freedom of choice is admitted, it follows by the same line of reasoning that one's thoughts are not the result of molecular reactions, being fixed physical laws. For if they are, his thoughts would be fixed by the physical conditions, and his choice would be made for him. Thus, if there is freedom, there must be at least some thinking possible quite independent of any corresponding cerebral process.

"On such a view, it is no longer impossible that consciousness may persist after the brain is destroyed. An examination of the evidence seems to support the view that there is no very close correspondence between brain activity and consciousness. It seems that our thinking is partially divorced from our brain, a conclusion which suggests, though of course does not prove, the possibility of consciousness after death.

"The old-fashioned evolutionary attitude was that the world as we know it developed as a result of chance, variations of all kinds occurring, some of which would be more suited to the conditions than others, and, therefore, surviving. More recent thought has found this viewpoint increasingly

difficult to defend. To the physicist it has become clear that the chances are infinitesimal that a universe filled with atoms having random properties would develop into a world with the infinite variety that we find about us.

"This strongly suggests that the evolutionary process is not a chance, but is directed toward some definite end. If we suppose that evolution is directed, we imply that there is an intelligence directing it. It thus becomes reasonable to suppose that intelligent minds may be the end toward which such an intelligent evolution is proceeding.

"A survey of the physical universe indicates that mankind is very possibly Nature's best achievement in this direction. Though atronomers tell us that there are millions upon millions of stars in the sky, a planet is a very rare occurrence, and a planet on which life can exist is even more rare.

"The evidence seems against the mechanistic view that the mind could not survive the brain, and no cogent reason remains for supposing that the soul dies with the body."

One day I was just leaving Dr. Millikan's office in Pasadena, when I asked him if his discovery of cosmic rays did not help to establish the theory of a cosmic or universal mind that ruled or directed all things.

"Why not say 'God'?" he asked with a smile. "There is no reason why a physicist should not believe in such a being, or force. We use the word 'God' to describe what is behind the mystery of existence. Science has seen the world developing through countless ages higher and higher qualities, moving on to better and better things. It pictures God, however He may be conceived, as essentially good, as providing a reason for existence and a motive for making the most of existence, in that we may be a part of the great plan of world progress." —*Bailey Millard.*

UNTHEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS*

By Hans Zinsser

(Professor of Bacteriology in the Harvard Medical School.)

Science is but a method. Whatever its material, an observation accurately made, and free of compromise to bias or desire, and undeterred by consequence, is science. Exploring thought can turn upon itself, study the process of its own deductions, and search the vaguer aspirations we call "soul." Much that the mind of man conceives can be dismissed as based on instinct to survive, or move by force of physical desire. But there are things that stir it more profoundly, and which cannot so simply be explained.

Through the recorded history of mankind, through all the races and throughout the world, a struggle to lend life nobility is evident. Not sprung from needs of physical existence, without relation to self-interest, often in opposition to the instincts of personal or racial preservation, man has developed codes and theories that prove a yearning for release from pure materialism. Call it conscience; call it search for beauty; call it the formulation of religion; whatever we may call it, it is there. And its consistency, under diverse experimental circumstance of time and background, proves it—as any scientific fact was ever proved—a natural law that governs consciousness.

Conceived in many varying forms, the spirit is the same. As William James has put it: "Stoic, Christian, Buddhist saint, their lives are indistinguishable. The theories which religion generates are variable, therefore secondary. To grasp their essence one must look to constant elements, the feeling and the conduct." The Greek philosophers, Confucius, Buddha, Christ—why did their precepts sweep across the earth in permanent conquest of the minds of men, as no mere

*An excerpt from the article as published in the "Atlantic Monthly."

victory of arms could subjugate their bodies? What was the irresistible impelling power that took the hearts of men by storm?

A leader leads because the way he points makes deep appeal to those that follow him. His teachings would be sterile did they not release a hidden force of dormant aspirations—of which there often was no consciousness until his call awakened them. It proves that, deep implanted in the mind of man, as much a part of his biology as laws of nourishment and growth, a hunger for spiritual development is rooted.

Conscience, pity, honor, sense of justice—untaught, they grow as organs of the mind.

And all this lends conviction to belief that there is some consistent, basic law which underlies the spirit of compassion, of charity and the nobilities of life by which we are impelled without volition, upward—whither no one knows—to some as yet unfathomed surely harmonious end.

Scientific thought can go no further. But need it?

FROM "THE WEDDING FEAST"

By Anna Hempstead Branch

The pebble has a curious will
That in my hand doth lie.
It seems as motionless and still
As the zenith in the sky.

It seems to make not any sound.
It does not hum nor sing.
It keeps a helpless simple round
Yet is a fearful thing.
Its molecules weave in and out,
They leap, they plunge, they dive.

Up from dark gulfs they whirl about
As if they were alive.

They live, they dance, they burn, they die,
Their Judgment Days draw on apace!
Between their smallest atoms lie
Oceans of darkest space.

Those atoms ache, they groan, they quake,
They hiss, they plunge, they roar!
And I that hold a silent stone
Lift up a living war.

It does not burst, it does not shake,
Nor fly dispersed in grains of sand.
Its shape is folded over it
Like a divine great hand.

It is the hand that lies so still!
It never sets them by.
A shape serene, but under it
Those whirling atoms dance and flit
Like the quick stars in the sky!

This earth, it is not as it seems.
It is the strangest place!
Once did I run on solid stones,
But now I trod on space.

NOTICE

Owing to lack of space we are omitting the current report. A detailed report will appear in the July issue.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

JULY, 1930

Healing Fires

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
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HEALING FIRES

By Swami Paramananda

(An address recently given by the Swami under the acacia tree on the terrace of Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California.)

"HEALING Fires!" You will perhaps wonder what this means. Let me draw a picture before you: Among ancient peoples there existed the custom of the altar fire. In India this fire had a profound significance. Upon it men poured their oblation of worship. At dawn, they knelt before it in order that they might be purified and start their day fresh, with new inspiration. In this way they believed all their sins and imperfections were burned to ashes. When a disciple sought out a teacher, his first duty was to gather fuel to keep the altar fire burning. If, through carelessness or through his slumbering attitude of body and mind, the fire went out, it was considered a very bad omen. "Superstition!" you will say. "And why should a disciple spend his time gathering fuel? Would it not have been better for him to study something of definite benefit to mind and body?" We cannot measure such matters with a measuring stick. Until we can quicken the soul faculty, we have no means of gauging spiritual values. I have given you this picture, not that you should follow it literally, but to show you the use and the beauty of the symbolic in life.

What is the real fire? What is the real light? We read

in the Bible and in the other Scriptures: "I am the Light of the world—the Light that is in the sun, moon, stars, and in man's being! I am the Fire that burns—the Fire that nothing can ever put out!" Yet how little we are aware of that great subtle element, if we care to call it that. So imprisoned are we in the concept of the flesh that we feel the aches, pains, disappointments of life as real, and are not conscious of those healing fires which burn in our own soul. Sometimes, however, thoughts come which seem almost to strike a blaze within us—thoughts of such spiritual intensity that they make us feel that we can surmount all our difficulties. For the moment, the body seems to us to be nothing—there are no handicaps, no obstructions, no obstacles. Again, we lose our hold on that consciousness, and everything falls upon us with tremendous weight. The greatest of all weight is the weight of self.

Junaid, when ill, prayed for his recovery, and a voice answering him said, "Dost thou come between thyself and Me?" This, of course, is a mystic utterance, but we must try and find its relationship with our everyday experience. "Dost thou come between Me and thee?" It is what is constantly happening in our lives. Our souls yearn for happiness; we strive to find peace, but that through which peace and happiness could flow to us—the current, the channel, the connection between man and his Maker—is blocked. If a stream of water is shut off from its source, it will dry up in no time. Same way it is with us. The unfoldment of our life and its fruition depends entirely on how well we keep ourselves connected with our Source—not in a superficial or dogmatic way, but with living spirit. I have no use for dogmatic religion. I think that probably it has done more harm and been more disturbing to the peace of man than anything else in the world. We become fanatics—over what? Over the

crust of dogma. We are like animals who fight for a bit of bone. Perhaps you may think that this expression is not applicable to us. Why not? Let us face the facts.

What is the cause of the unrest in human beings? Why are we so disturbing to one another? Why are we not able to bring a solution for our problems or a sense of comradeship to this world of life, so that when someone stumbles we can give him our hand in trust, in faith, in love; our courage in this way supplying the courage that is needed by that other soul? It is because there has not been kindled within us those healing fires which would burn all of our imperfections, worries, doubts, and misgivings to nothing.

The Hindu classics constantly speak of this fire of wisdom. Those who have studied the Bhagavad-Gita are familiar with this passage: "As kindled fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the wisdom fire reduce all actions (Karma) to ashes." It is for us to kindle that inward fire, but it cannot be done by material means. Here it is that we find the departure from dogmatic religion. One single moment of inner communion with our real being will bring us more genuine spiritual insight than any repetition of creed or hours of what we call intellectual research.

Religion is being and becoming. More and more do I become interested in this living aspect of life, as I see the unrest, the unhappiness in human hearts—the sickness that dwells in the souls of men. We sit with a person, and very soon we find the whole atmosphere is becoming poisonous because of the thought which emanates from him. Yet, no matter how much we may want to help him, there can be no fundamental healing until idealism has been established in that soul. It can be established in every soul. Your mind is capable of as high and lofty thoughts as those which inspired Christ and St. Paul, St. Francis, Joan of Arc, and all

those great personages who stand as the criterion of spiritual fulfillment. You are capable of inspiring not only yourself, but every one who comes in contact with you.

Let us cleanse our being—let us not deceive ourselves. Why should we? Ours is the divine heritage. We stand face to face with Divinity; why then should we fear the fire? Is the goldsmith afraid of the fire when he places his gold there? He knows that only in this way can he fashion it. So we shall not be afraid of kindling the fire of wisdom within our own soul, knowing it can destroy nothing of reality; it can only enhance our value, making us more potent, more definitely powerful. Fear is not an attribute of the soul. Only when we have lost our contact with the divine consciousness does the element of fear enter in, forming the seed of disease and doubt. Suspicion, jealousy, anger, all these things come when we have departed from our spiritual heritage, when we have broken our connection with our Source.

"O Thou that sittest above the sound of prayer—
O Thou lovely One, with Thy beautiful face,
with Thy beautiful eyes!
Thou knowest not crime;
Thou sayest of the evil doer,
'His brow is fevered,' and Thou layest
Thy hand on his hot brow
And coolest it to peace."

This is a symbolic image of the Goddess of Mercy, and what a lovely image it is! Why not make ourselves like that, so that when we see someone who is fevered with anger or anguish, doubting or grieving, we may give our touch to soothe and heal? When Christ was in the flesh people came to Him to be healed, just as today they run to a place when they hear that a healing has occurred there, and invariably

He asked of them: "Do you believe I can do these things?" Many gave answer, but only those who had openness of soul, the faith, the feeling, were able to receive. They were roused from their slumber, and their souls were quickened. If the soul be not quickened there is nothing that can help us. That is what I mean when I say I have no interest in dogmatic religion. Anybody can follow form. People think they prove their devotion by raising their voice or their sword against those who do not believe in their particular faith. This is a great mistake. The only weapon that any man should carry for his conquest is the weapon of love; also, the only armor he should wear is the armor of love and of fortitude, and he should learn to carry this weapon and wear this armor daily and habitually. For this reason, he should kneel, as I have said, each morning at rising, before that fire of wisdom in his heart, with this prayer:

"O Thou all-consuming Flame,
Burn my blemishes to ashes!
Grant me that element which fire cannot burn—
Give me new life!"

When day after day we can aspire to this with fervent spirit, something new is born within us: the Golden Being rises in our heart.

Think how wonderful it would be if some morning, when we took our look into the mirror, we should see a face, different from that which we are accustomed to seeing—captivating, free from lines of worry and dejection, with no trace of gloom or anguish—a face resembling our ideal, all full of beauty and health! Would we not be amazed? We would be unable to turn our eyes away. Yet that beauty, that freshness, is already within us. There are some people who learn to look into the mirror of life and see the reflection of their

true being. All that makes for sin, sorrow, despondency, and doubt falls away from them, and they are blissful. They know happiness, because they have dropped those elements which are the cause of unhappiness. They seek no gain, because they have attained That beside which all other gain seems worthless. They know That by knowing which nothing else remains to be known.

"These are only fancies!" you may say. They are not fancies; they are the Real, and until we reach That we are but travelers, wanderers with no certainty of finding our goal. Spirituality we possess as our birthright—the very spark from those Healing Fires. When that spark glows with living radiance, all our imperfections vanish.

"Yes," Tennyson says, "it is true, there are moments when the flesh is nothing to me, when I feel and know the flesh to be the vision, God and the spiritual the only and true. Depend upon it, the spiritual is the real."

It is not merely to the great men that this realization comes; it can come to us all—now, in this very life. We need not wait to have it as a solace after we are dead and gone; it is our divine heritage, unbounded, and the more we become conscious of it, the more will fear and all forms of disbelief and suspicion fade away. Do you not feel the closeness of it? That is the thing, to feel it close, and not in some far distant realm.

Ordinary people calculate. When they are asked to give, they withhold their heart and hand lest they themselves should be deprived; they close the very door through which the light of the sun, the spiritual Sun, comes to shine upon them and heal them of their ills. Let us, therefore, open all the channels of our soul and feel ourselves connected with That which is ever-living, indestructible. It is the most potent thing in life. When a man connects himself with That,

even though he may be shut in a mountain cave, he does the greatest service for humanity.

Close your eyes and picture such a devout spirit. See him kneeling before his altar, pouring out the oblation of his soul, destroying all contamination, bringing healing into the world.

Consider your own life. This life is a gift from no other than God—the True One, the Eternal Principle—therefore the only way it can be enhanced is to keep it constantly connected with that One, in the same way as the stream is connected with its source, as I have said. Yesterday there was a downpour of rain; every little gully was like a big river, but how quickly these rivers vanished! They did not draw from an inexhaustible supply. Same way it is with our emotions, and with the momentary influx of what we call our happiness. Unless these are connected with the eternal, undying Source, they do not last. That is why wise men choose to have nothing but God. In Him they find all things; without Him, there is nothing. How many of us could make that choice? It would be the real test of our spiritual venture and our sincerity. How many of us could say literally and definitely, without any question in our mind, "Yes, first and always I want that One. Let other things come and go as they please, I choose That which is undying, unfailing, and eternal; I desire His grace."

Solomon prayed for wisdom and only wisdom; he chose it before all the riches, the pomp and glory of the world, and made the great discovery that everything came with it. "First seek ye the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things shall be added unto you." This was the Christ's teaching, and man has not been able to improve on it, although, through his cleverness, his ingenuity, what he calls his intellectual gifts, he has tried to do so. He has

said, "Let us pay heed to the things that are immediate." As a result, he has found that he has not been able to take care of the immediate things, and he has lost sight of the Eternal. No one can afford to do this.

Let the words that I am expressing, the atmosphere that is breathed here, remind us of that Infinite Being; and let us carry this deeper consciousness into the world of life, the world of confusion, reminding those who are groping that there is a clear path. We must admit that there are many who are groping, who do not know which way to go. No matter how much you may want to help them, however, you cannot give them anything until you have found your own definite line of action, until you have become fixed. Be fixed in God—fixed in Truth! What God? I should say there is but One—not one for the Christians, one for the Hindus, and one for the Buddhists, but One Eternal Being. If we do not see this clearly, it is our misfortune; we do not perceive the significance of Truth.

Just as a mother cares for her children, the great, tender Mother is looking after us. It is She who loves through all. As this consciousness grows we find solace, we find comfort. Even though we may have many obstacles on the physical plane, we overcome them in the light of Truth. In the healing fires they are consumed utterly.

Kindle those fires within you; pour your oblation upon them; let them cleanse and purify you before you go into the arena of life. Make yourself more and more golden. When the ordeal comes in the way of suffering, trial or distrust from others, the very act of keeping those fires burning will make you so invulnerable that nothing will be able to touch you.

Words are empty, my friends. When it comes to these big things, they are altogether inadequate. Sometimes it

seems that the only way we shall be able to see is to tear down the veil of what we call our equipment, our knowledge. Often I think of what Swami Vivekananda used to say when people came to him with their arguments and their discussions: "Is there not enough water in the ocean to drown all that you think you know—your credentials, and your assets?"

If a person is cleansed in his thought, nothing can contaminate him; he cannot be made sick even by the sickness of the body. The great Emerson speaks of this; he says:

"We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which house today in this mortal frame shall ever re-assemble in equal activity in a similar frame, but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness nor buried in my grave."

This consciousness may be planted in our mind like a little seed, but it will not grow for those who are ignorant, those who are careless; we must nurture it with our feelings, with our faith, and with our prayers. Let us be staunch, let us be genuine, especially as we follow the spiritual path. When we pray, let it not be so that people will think us devout, rather let us close all avenues, that no one may realize we are in the act of prayer. The Hindus have a very definite feeling concerning this. There is One who knows all things; He understands and answers.

Either you believe in God or you believe in your own power. If you want to believe in your own power, do so, try it out thoroughly. You will, however, come to the conclusion that there is but one Power, that even your hands, your feet, your brain, grow more efficient as you become conscious of that Power. Daily and habitually, at rest or in action, you should remind yourself that you are nothing unless you

are sustained by That. Even when you blunder, if you do not lose sight altogether that there is a divine purpose, you can transmute your ills into something beautiful. Not only your ills! Through contact with you, other lives can be transformed and redeemed—the accumulation of days and years of wrong living consumed into nothingness by the touch of those fires.

Why are you afraid—afraid to trust, afraid to give? If you have been unable to reach people through your love, then give more love, more light, more strength. Always as you give, you will find greater abundance within. Today, in our modern life, everything is made very convenient for us: we hear so much; we read so much; we go to so many places. But what have we in reality? What is all this speed for? Where are we going, and what shall we gain when we get there? It is time to use common-sense, time for us to kindle the healing fires, that we may radiate Light—God's Light—and behold in the mirror of life our true image, instead of seeing ourselves as mortals, frightened by disease and death.

Let us carry with us that flame of faith, that flame of healing, that fire which is immortal, so that each day we may look toward the dawn, conscious of our divine heritage, and go forth into the world of life, inspired to help and serve—conveying by our very being that we are of that eternal, undying Principle. Let us be armed with these thoughts and be blessed!

I pray thee lend me thine ears, and hearken to the things that will be said. The setting of them in thy heart will be advantageous unto thee. They will enable thy heart to right itself when a gale of words beateth hard upon it.

—*From the Teachings of Amen-em-apt.*

THRONE OF GOD

By John Tauler

(A Dominican mystic and preacher of the 14th Century—a pupil of Meister Eckhart.)

In the same way that a dying man cares nothing for all the honor or shame that could be heaped upon him, because his thoughts are elsewhere, so also, when a man in his innermost heart is turned to God, he is a strong Throne of God, nothing can affright him, neither love nor sorrow, for he rests in that essential peace which is the Dwelling-place of God. . . . Preserve and guard this peace, dear children, that no man can take it from you, and that the Dwelling-place of God may not be destroyed. O, dear child, preserve this; be silent; suffer; abstain from evil; and rest in peace. Rest, and trust, and keep to thyself; do not run about too much; be not agitated, preoccupied or impulsive; but realize the presence of thy Lord of Lords in thy heart, where He sits on His throne, glorious and powerful, so that He may not be disturbed and His peace diminished.

Now, when men are resting in this peace, then the Cherubim come in all their brightness, and lighten up men's hearts with their godlike light as with a sudden glance. This glance pierces the men through and through; and their hearts are so filled with light, that, were it necessary, they could judge all men; and yet this illumination is but a glance; the quicker it is, the truer, the nobler, and the surer.

Then come the burning Seraphim with their flaming love, and they kindle love in the hearts of men; and this, too, is done in a moment, so that the love of man becomes so broad and wide that it embraces within itself the love of all things. It seems to him as though he would set all men alight; and all is so sudden and quick, that it seems to him as though he

would be consumed himself. This flame is kindled in the innermost thoughts of the glorified man; and yet it lights up also the other two parts of man, his soul and the outer man.

Such men become so godlike and so well-regulated, so truly resigned, virtuous, peaceful and calm, that no one is ever conscious of any infirmity in them, either in words or deeds; and yet they look upon themselves as nothing, and heed all as little as if it had taken place in someone a thousand miles away. They look upon all that God may work by them, or in them, as apart from themselves, taking no credit for it; for they think of nothing but their own absolute nothingness, and regard themselves as lower than all men. These verily are the heavens in which the Father dwells, as the Gospel says: "Their Angels always see the Face of My Father who is in heaven."

May God help us all thus to attain. Amen.

THE ALCHEMIST

By Julia P. Dabney

Men think because I play with glass retorts
And cunning crucibles and strange alembics
That I am searching for the evidence—
Through chemic semblances and changing forms—
O' the human soul!—perchance to bottle up
Somehow unwary breaths of God Himself!
Oh fools and blind! They little know my ways.
My gaugeless crucible is mine own heart;
A very furnace when thought concentrates
Therein, while through it soaring flames
Leap up and up with inconceivable power
From some vast hidden Source beyond all plumb
Till I am whelmed with the intrinsic glory!

O ye who think that science tells you all;
Why—you but scratch on the circumference,
The naked rind, the perishing cuticle
Of real things; and think with probe and scalpel
And poor dissecting knife to grasp and pin
The ultimate of being!
You dream because your skilled hand can lay bare
The brain's grey matter you may thus expose
The elements of Spirit. Drop those tools—
Those impotent tools! Spurning the surfaces,
Cleave to the Centre; humbly waiting there,
Mayhap the Ineffable will sweep on you;
Beyond all doubt and cavil you will see
At last the absolute truth—the unity
Of all—Creator and created:—one—one life
From the resplendent star to tiniest atom—
That—God's! His Word made manifest.
And then declare the indissoluble fact
As I do now. *God IS—and so I am—*
Forever!

A MESSENGER OF THE BELOVED

By Swami Vijayananda

(Reprinted from the "Prabuddha Bharata.")

A little bird singing from a neighboring tree suddenly shattered my dream. . . . It was a beautiful May morning in the Himalayas. I was watching in amazed fascination the magic play of sunshine on a little cluster of white clouds hovering over the majestic snow-peaks. Such a vast and extensive range of snows is seldom seen anywhere. Over six hundred miles long! The divine *Nanda Devi* towering majestic above the clouds with its sky-kissing domes, the *Trisul,* resplendent like a shining silver pyramid, and many

other peaks of varied forms and shapes—how sublime they looked as they shone in infinite tints, now violet, now pink, and again crimson! And lo, in a moment the northern sky is flooded with the purest gold! A vision of beauty, so grand, so sublime! And yet men complain that there is no joy, glory or inspiration on this earth. They say the world is old, stale and monotonous. People, devoid of imagination and inspiration, do of course produce dull works from their pen, brush or chisel. But there are others who have revealed delicate secrets of beauty, and command eternal homage from mankind. And that Master Artist, God, who in a twinkle of an eye creates such wonder out of Himself—to call His works dull or insipid, is not that the height of blasphemy? Some say that the author of this creation is God, others, that it is mere Nature. But why worry so long as you have these beauties of color and form spread before you on which to feast your soul? This embrosial feast—

There! the bird[1] is piping forth its shrill, penetrating cry: "Oh you, what are you doing?" So shrill is the song that the hills are echoing it. The whole place is filled with its vibrant notes. The magic colors on the snows and the sky are vanishing away. The shining peaks are enveloped in thick vapors. I start up. My mind is suddenly withdrawn from the feast of Nature, and eagerly seeks for suitable reply to the imperious call.

What am I doing indeed? Is it any good flying on the wings of imagination, forgetting the stern realities of life, the call of duties, the pangs of the soul's imperfections, and the thousand shadows that momentarily darken its shining calm, and also, alas, the Face of the Beloved, waiting in the inmost heart for my coming—Him, my Friend, my Lord, my All

[1]A summer bird in the Himalayas that seems to sing the exact Bengali words, "Tumi kee kachcho goh," which mean in English, "Oh, what are you doing?"

in All? Only a moment ago, my soul was enjoying the delicious cup brewed from the multicolored charms of the world. But now it lies empty and broken on the ground. Fallen from the summit of joy, I lie in the slough of despondency.

Yes, my friend, I am doing nothing. I am averse to my Beloved. I have not yet curbed my wayward ego and laid it at His feet. He, my Beloved, masquerading in variegated forms in men and animals, and in other infinite guises, has not received my loving homage and service. I have forgotten myself. The external has lured me away by its siren charms, and all the while my Lord has been waiting, waiting in the inner shrine. I have been a victim of the senses. Oh, what indeed am I doing?

The bird is calling insistently: "What are you doing? What are you doing?" Is it the messenger of my Beloved—of my jealous Lord who would not brook a single look or heart-beat wasted on any other? Has the bird come from Him to see what I am doing—whether I am a tireless pilgrim on the way to His temple? Did He say when He sent His messenger: "Go and see why he tarries so long, and keeps Me waiting. Ask of his eyes if he remembers Me, of his heart-throbs if he hears My footfalls, and of his breath if he sees My face?" The bird has found me betraying His sacred trust, and is piping out its shrill protest in an unceasing cry—"Oh, what are you doing? Oh, what are you doing?"

Friends, such is the infinite grace of my Beloved. He has not forgotten me, though I forgot him. When oblivion blinds the soul and leads it astray, He in his infinite mercy sends His emissaries to enquire after us, to guide us through the dark alleys and intricacies of life. He is ever drawing us towards Him, towards His eternal joy and peace. His messengers are everywhere. Every movement in nature is an eager call from His dear lips to hasten our steps towards

Him. Could we but see and hear! Would not then Nature keep company with us in our love-tryst with Him? And there would be no blunder, no tears, no heart-breaking, and no separation.

As it is, we are like parrots imprisoned within the cage of Nature. The encaged parrot forgets its pristine nature and the memory of the wild delights of free wings and boundless azure. The rays creeping through its prison bars cloud the joyous affluence of the golden morning. Freedom no more whispers in its ears the rustles of the green leaves. Forgetting its native song, it only mimics the alien voice of its captor. It is a slave, cramped and cribbed.

The bondman, imprisoned within the dull senses and the blind passions and desires, has been reduced to the state of the caged parrot. All his thoughts are concentrated on his little self. Noble aspirations have forsaken him. He craves only for the superficial, and mistakes tinsel for gold. He has shut himself within the walls of meanness, jealousy, hatred, greed and lust. Better instincts do not find play in his soul. He has strangled his conscience, his noblest helpmate. He sits in the dark corners of his cage, broken-hearted, and bereft of his native effulgence. His powers are gone, and hope and faith no more animate him. Good appears as evil to his distorted vision, the real as unreal, and the transient as eternal. Good counsels do not prevail with him. The call of freedom does not reach his ears, and his blinded vision cannot see the far-off beckonings of the eternal. To his embittered soul everything is gall and wormwood. And the anxious footsteps of the Beloved sound in vain before the portals of his soul.

Such, alas, we are—bound and shackled and blind!

But let us not lose heart. For hark, the bird is again singing merrily—"What are you doing?" The Lord has not for-

gotten us. His ever-awake love is watching over us. And anon His light shall shine. Do not His encircling arms ever protect us from eternal ruin? Through darkness and despair the song of His flute is cheering us on to where He waits for us. And His messengers ever call the hour of the tryst: "Oh, what are you doing? Adorn yourself for the coming of the eternal Bridegroom. For the hour is nigh, and the air is thick with His perfume. Come out under the open sky and surrender yourself to His golden smile."

I have come out. The bird sings its merry song. A new light kisses my eyes, and a new delight fills my soul. I hear His oncoming footfalls. The shackles fall off. And behold, the snows are again aglow with a celestial light, and the sky is echoing their glad laughter. The trees nod their heads in glee, and the flowers look at me with wide-eyed approval. Yes, the earth is again suffused with the light of heaven, and there is no separation between myself and Him!

THE UNFAILING LIGHT *

By Sister Devamata

No man walks in darkness. As in the macrocosm each celestial system has its central sun round which lesser heavenly bodies revolve, so in the macrocosm each individual turns round a centre of light burning in the heart of his being. By that light he knows, by that light he thinks, by that light he acts, by that light he lives. If he lives, acts, thinks or knows obscurely, it is because he has veiled the light. It can never be extinguished, any more than the sun can be extinguished by any effort of ours, although a cloud may cover it. This light that burns within us is an unfailing light—a glowing flame which nothing can dampen.

Lesser suns in the heavens partake of the same nature as

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the central sun; and that individual flame, in like measure, partakes of the nature of the Great Light at the centre of the universe, mingling unceasingly with it. What is the nature of that Great Light? It is more easily defined by what it does than by what it is. It sheds its effulgence with such revealing power on all created things that their innermost essence becomes plain; therefore it gives absolute knowledge. It covers the whole area of being, leaving no shadowy spaces, no dark corners where ignorance may lurk; hence there is nothing to limit it and the knowledge gained through it is boundless.

When unbounded light penetrates the universe through and through, filling all space, no place is left for darkness or gloom; joy finds unimpeded expression and happiness becomes a cosmic habit. Since, further, joy and knowledge presuppose existence, life itself is still another gift of the radiant Centre. Thus we have three predicates of the Great Light—absolute knowledge, unbroken joy, eternal life; and man is partaker in all three.

Why is he so unaware of it? Because he is facing in the wrong direction. When we turn our back to the light, we see the shadow, not the sun. So, as long as man nurtures an outgoing tendency, he will see darkness and know the light only by reflection. We create our own night and day. We pattern our schedule for mind and mood after that of this dual outer world. We imagine that we must accept these alternations of gloom and gaiety, suffering and enjoyment, pleasure and pain; that they are an inevitable part of the routine of living. We feel heroic when we bear them bravely and patiently.

There is a higher form of heroism with which we must make acquaintance. It does not endure; it transcends. Our mood is not the result of the play of the universe on us. It

is shaped by our reaction against it. Pain may be inflicted despite us, but the suffering which arises from it is of our making. Pain is the world's action on us, suffering is our reaction to it. True heroism consists not in bearing the reaction but in checking it. We cannot hope to control the universe or curb its play upon us, but we can control our response to it. Everywhere in creation we shall find the same sequence of light and shadow, night and day, following each other in relentless alternation. But in that inner realm of our heart and mind, the realm of thought and feeling, there need be no shadow, no nightfall, for the light which blazes there is shadowless like the sun of noon and it has no setting.

If we would transcend these alternating aspects of daily living, we must keep our face set towards the day. The mighty suns of heaven know no night. Like them we must chase the shadows of darkness from our lives. We must learn to dwell in the light. As a good workman carries his task near the light in order to perform it more efficiently, so we must carry each thought close to that central flame to think it more effectively; we must bring our work there to do it more perfectly; we must hold our life close to it to live it more wisely. We must do all things in the glow of that effulgent flame.

This is what is meant by the injunction of Scripture: "Let your light shine." We do not have to kindle it. We do not have to feed it. We have only to let it shine forth and it will make our whole being luminous. Our face, our body, our thought, our words, will radiate light. The nimbus and the halo are not mere imaginations of the artist; they register a subtle fact of being.

If we put no obstruction in the way, that inner flame will penetrate to the farthest limits of the world that surrounds us and illumine it also. It will glint on each task and make

it bright. It will reflect from every face, from every flower and every growing thing, from sky and earth, from mountain and sea, and the whole universe will seem to us full of light. When we attain this state of consciousness, the feeling of joyousness will be continuous and happiness will change from a mood to a habit.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

The fire made by the burning bamboo is soon extinguished unless kept alive by constant blowing. Continual devotion is necessary to keep alive the fire of spirituality.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Man is a weak, miserable animal until in his soul there burns the fire of God. But when this fire kindles (and it kindles only in a soul illumined by religion) man becomes the most powerful being in the world. And this cannot be otherwise, because then it is no longer *his* power which works in him, but the power of God. So this is what religion is, and in what its essence consists. —*Tolstoy.*

Earth's crammed with heaven
And every common bush afire with God;
But only he who sees takes off his shoes.

—*Elizabeth Barrett Browning.*

In every bit of bread we eat, in every cloak that warms us, in every medicine that cures us, there is something sacramental. Our sin lies in this, that we live on the sacrifice, and fail to see it. —*Author Unknown.*

One may heal with holiness; one may heal with the Law; one may heal with the Holy Word. This it is that will best drive away sickness from the body of the faithful, for this is the best of remedies. —*Zarathushtra.*

HOLY NATIVITIES

V.

MOHAMMED

[The religion of Mohammed, springing with vivid beauty, with fire and fervor and burning passion from the barren wastes of Arabia, can only be likened to the glory of a desert springtide, when from the dry sands gush forth living fountains of perfume and color.

Flowers of the desert—flowers of legend! How revealing they are of a hidden life! How they soften the rocks of fact with their warm loveliness!

The following story of the birth of Mohammed is told by two devout believers: E. Dinet and Sliman ben Ibrahim who derived their account from ancient Islamic records. It is an excerpt from their book, "The Life of Mohammed the Prophet of Allah," which was issued, in a limited edition, by the Paris Book Club, 11 rue de Chateaudun, as a memorial to the Moslem soldiers who sacrificed their lives in the "Great War of the Nations."]

A rosy ray lit up the horizon; the stars paled, and a voice cried out in cadence, in the silence of the dawn:

"Allah is the greatest! There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is the Prophet of Allah! Come and pray! Come to salvation!"

High up above the flat housetops and the palm trees of the oasis, the last notes of the Muazzin's call, wafted from the balcony of the slender minaret, died away in the infinite space of the desert.

Mohammedans who were still slumbering, enwrapped in the white folds of their shroud-like mantles, sprang to their feet with a start, like dead men coming to life. They hur-

ried to fountains where they performed their ablutions; and then, with clean skins and pure thoughts, they gathered together in long processions, elbow to elbow, all turned in one direction: that of the Holy Ka'bah of Makkah (Mecca). . . .

Every day, each time the rays of the sun change color: at rosy dawn; flaming noon; during gilded sunset, when it descends below the horizon in all the yellow sadness of its disappearance; and at the moment it is enshrouded in the blue veiling of night, not only in the Mosques, but also in the houses and streets, in *cafès* and market-places, in the country or the desert, all Moslems, alone or grouped together, wherever they may be, without needing to be called by the Muazzin or led by the Imam, are bound to stop short in their work and even interrupt their trend of thought for a few minutes, thus glorifying the Benefactor.

For more than thirteen centuries, from the Atlantic's African shore as far as the Chinese coast-line of the Pacific, more than two hundred millions of the Faithful turn five times daily in the direction of the Holy Ka'bah of Makkah; their millions of prayers being garnered there to be offered up to the Most High, bearing witness to the undying gratitude of the souls of Islam.

This mysterious town, upon which the aspirations of so many human beings close in, was almost unknown in ancient times. What is it like?

Is it one of those cities, picturesquely situated, where ostentatious kings built splendid palaces? . . . Is it one of those vast commercial boroughs, dominating land and sea routes to which the riches and produce of the universe came in abundance? Or was it an extensive imperial capital? . . .

Makkah has nothing in common with all this, being established in one of the most arid and forsaken spots on earth. . . . Nevertheless, many opulent towns are jealous of

its glory, for it shelters in its midst the Holy Temple of the Ka'bah, besides being the birthplace of our Lord Mohammed, the Prince of Prophets! . . .

The Ka'bah is not the tomb of the Prophet, nor an object to be worshipped, as many Europeans imagine. It is a temple called "Beit Allah al Haram" (the Holy House of Allah), and its origin can be traced to the most distant days of antiquity.

According to the Arab tradition, it was built by Adam, the father of the human race. Destroyed by the flood, it was rebuilt on the same foundations by the Prophet Abraham, with the help of his son, Ishmael, the ancestor of the Arabs. Since then, often repaired, but retaining the same lines and proportions, the Ka'bah became the goal of Arab pilgrims flocking to adore Allah, the Only One. . . .

Little by little, the worship of Allah, the Only One, having degenerated in the memory of the pilgrims, who added the practice of idolatry, Mohammed was sent to destroy the three hundred and sixty images they adored. . . .

Close to the Ka'bah is the well of Zamzan. Its miraculous waters gushed forth from the earth to save Ishmael from the tortures of thirst when lost in the desert with his mother, Hajar (Hagar). Neglected by the Arab tribes in the dark days of ignorance, it became choked up by sand, and was dug anew by . . . Abdul Muttalib bin Hashem, of the Quraish tribe, the grandfather of the future Prophet.

One day, Abdul Muttalib . . . set forth from The Sanctuary, his favorite son, Abdullah, holding his hand.

On the threshhold of the temple was seated Quotila, a woman of the Bani Asad tribe. On catching sight of the lad, she started to her feet, evincing sudden surprise. She stared at him with strange persistence. . . .

"Whither art thou going?" she called to him.

"To where my father leadeth me."

"Stop, and listen to me. I offer thee a hundred camels. . . . if thou wilt consent to throw thyself upon me, now at once."

The young man turned away, filled with confusion, and rejoined Abdul Muttalib who took him to the house of Wahb ibn Abdi Manaf, whose daughter he thought would make a good wife for his boy. Wahb was one of the chieftans of the Bani Zahrah tribe, and Abdul Muttalib being numbered among the princes of the Quraish, a most noble tribe, an alliance . . . would be easily brought about, and so the marriage of Abdullah with Aminah, daughter of Wahb, took place without further loss of time.

Abdullah went off with his bride to the dwelling of Abu Talib, his uncle. There the marriage was consummated during the young couple's sojourn of three days and three nights. When the newly-married young man went out of the house, he came face to face again with Quotila, the woman who had previously hailed him with such lack of decency, and he was surprised at her complete indifference as she saw him pass by. Abdullah was considered to be the handsomest youth in Makkah. . . . He felt hurt at her indifference, following so quickly on her great ardor.

"How comes it that thou dost not ask me again for what thou hungered for but a little while ago?" he asked Quotila.

"Who art thou?" she replied.

"I am Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib."

"Art thou the stripling whose brow seemed to me to be surrounded with a luminous aureola which has now disappeared? What hath befell thee since we first met?"

He apprised her of his marriage, and Quotila guessed that the radiance surrounding the future Prophet had passed away from the forehead of Abdullah into the womb of Ami-

nah, his wife.

"By Allah, I made no mistake!" she told him. "On thy brow I discovered the pure light that I would have dearly liked to possess in the depths of my body. But now it belongeth to another who will be delivered of 'The Best Among Created Beings,' and there remaineth naught of thee that I care for."

Thus it came about that Abdullah, by the words that fell from the lips of this learned woman, got to hear of his wife's pregnancy and the future in store for his son. Abdullah did not live long enough to have the happiness of knowing his offspring, for Mohammed's father died at Yasrib two months before Aminah was delivered.

Aminah, mother of Allah's Chosen One, spoke thus:

"Since the day I carried my son in my womb until I brought him forth, I never suffered the least pain, I never even felt his weight and should not have known the state I was in if it had not been that after I conceived and was about to fall asleep, an angel appeared to me, saying: 'Dost thou not see that thou art pregnant with the Lord of thy Nation, the Prophet of all thy people? Know it full well.' At the same instant, a streak of light, darting out of my body, went up northwards—yea, even unto the land of Syria.

"When the day of my deliverance came due, the angel appeared to me again and gave me a warning: 'When thou shalt bring forth thy child into the world, thou must utter these words: "For him I implore the protection of Allah, the Only One, against the wickedness of the envious," and thou shalt call him by the name of Mohammed, which means The Lauded, as he is announced in the Taurat and the Injil, for he will be lauded by all the inhabitants of Heaven and Earth.' "

When the planet Al-Moushtari passed, a line of light dart-

ed for the second time from Aminah's body in the direction of faraway Syria, and it illuminated the palace of the town of Busra. At the same time, other prodigies astonished the world: the Lake Sowa suddenly dried up; a violent earthquake made the palace of Chosroes the Great tremble, and shattered fourteen of its towers; the Sacred Fire, kept alight for more than a thousand years, went out, in spite of the exertions of its Persian worshippers, and all the idols of the universe were found with their heads bowed down in great shame.

All these portents caused fear in the hearts of those who witnessed them; but, despite the predictions of Al Moudzenab, the Parsee sorcerer, who had been warned in a dream that a great upheaval in the destiny of the universe would be caused by an event to take place in Arabia, the occurrence was unperceived: the birth of a child of the Quraish tribe at Makkah, a tiny town lost in the midst of the wilderness, unknown to the gorgeous monarchs of East and West alike, or else despised by them.

Our Lord Mohammed (May Allah shower His Blessings upon Him and grant Him salvation!) was born a few seconds before the rising of the morning star, on a Monday, the twelfth day of the month Rabi-ul-Awwal of the first year of the Era of the Elephant. (August 29th, A.D. 570).

When he came into the world, he was devoid of all pollution, circumcised naturally, and the umbilical cord had been cut by the hand of the angel Jibra'il. The atmosphere of the city being fatal to infants, the leading citizens were in the habit of confiding their children to Bedouin wet-nurses, who brought them up in their Badya-land, where dwelt the Bedouins or nomads. Shortly after the birth of Mohammed, about a dozen women belonging to the tribe of the Bani

Sad, all bronzed by the bracing breezes of their country, arrived at Makkah to seek nurslings. Upon one of them devolved the honor of suckling the Prophet of Allah. And she was Halimah, signifying "The Gentle."

Quoth Halimah bint Zuib: "It was a barren year, and both my husband, Haris bin Abdul Ozza, and myself were plunged in dire distress. We made up our minds to go to Makkah, where I purposed to seek a foster-child whose grateful parents would help us out of our miserable plight. We joined a caravan where there were many women of our tribe, bound likewise on the same errand. The she-ass I was riding was so thin and exhausted by privation that she came nigh upon breaking down on the road and we did not get a wink of sleep all night by reason of our poor child being tortured by the pangs of hunger. Neither in my breasts, nor in the udder of a female camel driven by my husband, did there remain one drop of milk to relieve my baby's pain. . . . In my parlous state, could I hope to take charge of a suckling?

"Lagging far behind the caravan, we arrived in Makkah at last, but all the new-born babes had already been allotted to the other women, except one child, and that was Mohammed. His father being dead and his family far from rich, despite the high rank it held in Makkah, none of the wet-nurses cared to take charge of the baby boy.

"We likewise turned away from him at first, but I was full of shame at thinking I should have to journey back empty-handed, for I feared the mockery of my friends luckier than I. Besides, my feelings were deeply stirred when I gazed upon that fine infant, bound to wither away in the unwholesome air of the town.

"My heart became filled with compassion; I felt my milk welling up miraculously in my breasts, so I said to my hus-

band: 'I swear by Allah that I have a good mind to adopt that orphan boy, notwithstanding that we have but slight hopes of ever earning anything worth talking about by so doing.' 'I cannot say thou art wrong,' he replied. 'Perhaps with him, the blessing of Allah may once more favor our tent.'

"Scarcely listening, I could no longer restrain myself, and rushed towards the handsome baby fast asleep. I placed my hand on its pretty little breast; he smiled and opened his eyes sparkling with light; I kissed his brow between them. Holding him tightly in my embrace, I made my way back to where our caravan was encamped. Once there, I offered him my right breast. . . . To my extreme astonishment, he found enough milk to satisfy his hunger. I proffered my left breast, but he refused it, leaving it to his foster-brother, and he always behaved in like fashion.

"A greater marvel still was when from our she-camel's teats, dried up that morning, my husband drew enough milk to appease the hunger that gnawed my entrails, and for the first time for many a month, the shades of night brought us refreshing sleep. 'By Allah, O Halimah!' exclaimed my husband next day on awaking, 'thou hast adopted a child that is verily blessed!'. . . .

"We reached our tents of the Bani Sad. I know no more arid soil than ours and our flocks had been mowed down by famine. But we marvelled at finding them in more thriving condition than during the most prosperous seasons, and the swollen teats of our ewes yielded more milk than we knew what to do with. . . .

"Prosperity and blessings remained in our tent unceasingly. Mohammed attained his second year, and it was then I weaned him. His disposition was truly uncommon. At the age of nine months he talked in a charming way with accents

that touched all hearts. He was never dirty; nor did he ever sob or scream, except peradventure when his nakedness chanced to be seen. If he was uneasy at nights and refused to close his eyes, I would bring him out of the tent, when he would fix his gaze immediately with admiration on the stars. He showed great joy, but when his glances were sated with the sight, he let his eyelids droop and allowed slumber to claim him:"*

At the Badya of the Beni Sad, Mohammed's first footsteps were printed on the ripple-marked carpet of the immaculate sands. . . . And there it was he slept under the dark blue tent of the star-studded sky, and his chest expanded, breathing the limpid air of desert nights. He grew strong, thanks to the healthy, wholesome food of the nomads: milk and cheese, with unleavened bread baked under hot ashes. . . .

Never were there effaced from his mind those pictures of the desert which were impressed on his earliest glances when, in company with other nomadic lads, he would climb to the top of a rock to watch over a grazing flock. Notwithstanding, being inclined to dream and meditate, he did not agree very well with the turbulence and high spirits of the little Bedouins, and preferred to hide away from them, and

*Washington Irving writes in his 'Mahomet and His Successors":

"Many were the wonders related by Halimah of her infant charge. On the journey from Mecca, the mule which bore him became miraculously endowed with speech, and proclaimed aloud that he bore on his back the greatest of prophets, the chief of ambassadors, the favorite of the Almighty. The sheep bowed to him as he passed; as he lay in his cradle and gazed at the moon it stooped to him in reverence. . . .

"The Arabian legends go on to extol the almost supernatural powers, bodily and mental, manifested by this wonderful child at a very early age. He could stand alone when three months old; run abroad when he was seven, and at ten could join other children in their sports with bows and arrows. At eight months he could speak so as to be understood; and in the course of another month could converse with fluency, displaying a wisdom astonishing to all who heard him."

ramble in solitude not too far from the tents.

[Here we must break our story or it will pass beyond the scope of this article.

As to the Prophet's real mother, Animah; like Devaki, mother of Sri Krishna, she went through the pangs of motherhood only to renounce its joys. Separated voluntarily from her little son just after his birth, she made a similar renunciation when he was brought back to her at the age of two by his weeping foster mother, who regained control of him on the plea that he was still too young to endure the unhealthy atmosphere of the town. Thus his young childhood was passed far from her yearning touch.

Later, frightened by an ecstatic seizure, during which Mohammed saw his breast cut open by two angel visitors, and a dark stain removed from his heart, his Bedouin guardians returned him to his home at Mecca, and, for the first time, the boy knew his own mother.

Alas! just as this sweet relationship unfolded, she died, and he was left in the charge of his old grandfather, Abdul Muttalib. After a short time he too passed away, and the future Prophet went to live with his uncle, Abu Talib.]

REPORT

VEDANTA CENTRE OF BOSTON

The activities at the Vedanta Centre of Boston continued throughout the summer months without interruption. Despite the summer heat, the attendance at the two Services on Sunday and the Class on Tuesday evening kept up remarkably well. It has been rather unusual for Swami Paramananda to spend such a long time in one place. This has revived the Boston work in a remarkable way. Besides the Centre's activities, the Peace Retreat at Cohasset has contin-

ued to hold its Saturday Services under the pine trees and the Sunset Service on Ashrama High Rock. Many have attended these Services faithfully throughout the summer. A new house is now being constructed which will be suitable for the winter activities. It is indeed a rare experience to go to this Ashrama Peace Retreat, which is only an hour's ride from Boston, and to feel so completely isolated from all noise and turmoil of the world. It is the Swami's intention to make this activity an all-the-year-round pilgrimage for those who value its privileges.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

At the Ananda-Ashrama of La Crescenta and the Vedanta Centre of 745 West Adams Street, Los Angeles, all the Sunday Services and weekly Classes have been carried on faithfully by Sister Daya during the last months of Swami Paramananda's absence from California. The garden and the hilltops of the Ananda-Ashrama are peculiarly beautiful this year and the out-of-door Services held under the acacia tree on the terrace of the Ashrama never fail to bring inspiration to those who faithfully come to this hilltop Peace Retreat. Swami Paramananda is expected to return to California soon.

RECEPTION

On July 17th, a special farewell reception was accorded to Srimati Gayatree Devi by the friends and members of the Vedanta Centre of Boston. A large number were present on this occasion and several gifted musicians contributed their share to make the evening a very rare one. Gayatree Devi was presented with an illuminated address expressing profound appreciation of her services during the four years of her stay in America. Also she was given a purse of gold. Her reply was most stirring and gratifying as it brought in

a vivid sense the picture of a real unity between the soul of the East and the soul of the West, especially through this channel of Indian womanhood. Soon after this she sailed for Europe where she is now gathering fresh experience through her travels and her contact with eminent men and women.

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

On June 21st the first birthday of the Ashrama at Cohasset was celebrated there by an enthusiastic and happy number of lovers and friends of that beautiful Peace Retreat. Surely Nature had been busily at work all the Spring to make the lovely Sanctuary look such a charming welcome! Every leaf on every tree shone waxen in the sunlight; wild roses bloomed along the pathway to the hill-top; the field below was gay with daisies and buttercups. At four o'clock, the exquisite notes of the violin in Schubert's Serenade called all together to the Shrine in the woods. Then, when Swami Paramananda took his place under the massive old pine tree (many of the people sitting on the ground at his feet) and read his most beautiful Nature poem, "Nature's Sanctuary," our joy was complete! More music, with an accompaniment by the birds who had been coming nearer and nearer when the Swami began to read, and surely their theme was the same as his, "The Adoration and Love of Nature and its Creator." Finally the golden notes of the wood thrush and the "If-you-please, I-am-here," of the chewink were right over our heads, while the flute notes of the veery came up from the deeper woods, a cricket chirped his joy and peace during all the Service which was shortened by a shower, sending everyone scampering to the little house on the rocks where dinner was served to seventy-six people. Then another short Service and the lovely ride home toward a glorious sunset sky, brought this most memorable day to its close.—A. H.

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VOLUME XIX

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NUMBER 8

"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

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Steadfastness

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"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
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A TORCH I CARRY

By Swami Paramananda

I CARRY a Flaming Torch in my hand
That ever reveals my path and leads my
steps to safety.
Friend of my heart, why dost thou fear?
Kindle thou thine own torch in this Sacred Fire.
Let all misgivings cease.
Often thou dost come to me
With thine eyes filled with tears
And thou art fearful
Lest thou dost cast thy burden of grief upon me.
But knowest thou not
That this Flaming Torch consumes all
Ere it toucheth me?
Be of comfort, good heart!
Be of cheer!
Be rid of all fears!
Know this Flame will consume all ills
And will reveal what is hidden now!
Then thy face will shine in the glow of
the torch
With radiant joy!

STEADFASTNESS

By Swami Paramananda

(An Address delivered by the Swami under the acacia tree on the terrace at Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California.)

There was a discussion this morning as to where we should hold the Service. Some very definitely wanted it in the Temple—they thought there was such a lovely atmosphere there. Others desired to have it out-doors. In the end, I had to decide; and when I looked at this tree* and saw what a beautiful boquet was here, not arranged by man's hand, I knew that this was the most inspiring place of all. Everything combined to create a sense of sanctity—the perfume—the humming of the bees. That was one of the points brought out—that the bees would be disturbing. So I asked the Keeper of the Bees, and her answer was that they are not attracted here through us; they are drawn by the blossoms, and they are satisfied just to find what they are seeking.

No sanctuary can ever take the place of Nature's Sanctuary—blessed Nature, related to God—unmixed, undiluted! This bouquet above our heads—can you duplicate it? You cannot. Man cannot, although sometimes in his arrogance he thinks because he has built an ornate church or cathedral and has filled it with jewels and other treasure that God must be confined there. That is a great error. God is Unbounded Spirit, and the only way we can worship Him truly is when we conceive Him as free and unbounded—giving without seeking anything in return; loving without asking to be loved; serving with no thought of being served. When such consciousness enters our human province, it elevates the mind to higher levels; it strengthens and re-

*The acacia tree, under which the Service was held, was a mass of golden flower-plumes which threw off an exquisite fragrance.

deems the individual.

Let us, therefore, as we sit here, lift our thoughts and prayers to the Supreme One, and make tranquil our hearts that they may reflect all things truly. Let us be imbued with that Spirit Unbounded, casting off for the time being all our fetters—fetters of thought, prejudice and superstition—that our aspirations may rise high, and there may be no discord within or without us.

This term "superstition" we always apply to the other man. In the Occident you think it is the Orientals—the Chinese, Japanese, Hindus—who are superstitious, while they think the same thing of you. It all depends on the view-point.

Once, in the business world, I met a young man who had spent some time in Mexico. He said to me: "We Americans are the most extraordinary people; when we live in Mexico we speak of the Mexicans as foreigners, yet it is their country."

Man makes a little circle—circle of creed, dogma, doctrine—circle of intolerance—and is not willing to see the beauty and the sublimity outside it. Life is inter-related. Every part of it is related with every other part; and if we are not blind and deaf, we shall derive great benefit from our contact with it in all its aspects.

"With charity for all; with malice toward none; with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in."

These are the words of one of the greatest of Americans, or *the* greatest of Americans; I might say, one of the greatest of mankind. After a time, we come to realize that that which is lofty and noble belongs to humanity. What Lincoln said is equally true for every portion of the world. We are, after all, living in one great kingdom of which these

provinces, nations, and countries are but the parts. Through our misfortune we forget this; we narrow our circle; we impoverish our mind; and although we may hold the idea of brotherhood, we do not apply it. We say, "Yes, we must realize the brotherhood of man; it is the teaching of Christ." But how can we realize it unless we expand our consciousness; unless we are willing to live the life? Creed and dogma do not help us; on the contrary, they often hinder our vision.

"Every time you hold yourself rigorously to the task that is appointed to you, for the time definitely attend to it, and carry it through with concentrated attention, you are adding to your power to resist temptation." This is in line with our theme, Steadfastness. Do not think any of us lack for steadfastness. We all of us have it, but the trouble is, we often misdirect this great gift without which we never can attain the highest. We know how tenaciously a stubborn man will cling to his ignorant habits, and how easy it is for us to distort what is given to us by God, the Supreme One.

"In all things throughout the world the man who looks for the crooked will see the crooked, and the man who looks for the straight will see the straight."

There are plenty of people who, even when you show them something beautiful, will try to see the defects in it, and invariably they succeed. You may say, they are very smart, they are cleverer than we are. But is it a wise policy always to see the dark and the crooked, always to look for the failure? For if we look for it, we shall find it; by our steadfast clinging to those aspects, we shall create them. We create them first in fancy, and then afterwards they become realities—great realities. Also it is true that the man who looks for the straight, the beautiful, the sublime, will be-

hold them. In the beginning, they may be only an outline; just as with the artist—his is the dream, the vision—a subtle picture born in his own mind. Then, tenaciously, steadfastly clinging to it; thinking, dreaming, living with it, he produces, as the product of his soul, a wonderful masterpiece—the boon of steadfastness.

Be resolved; do not be fluctuating. Nothing is gained in small matters, and certainly not in spiritual affairs, by indecision and wavering. Often you come right to the edge of your kingdom, almost you penetrate the darkness and gain your vision, and then you change your purpose; you focus in another direction.

Of course you will say, "How can we know?" Sometimes it is best that we do not know. The greatest man is not he who thinks he knows everything, but rather that one who performs with devotion whatever task is placed before him; who works with concentration in every department of life. Such a man, no matter what he does, or wherever he may be placed, is whole-hearted there. Now we are all interested in concentration; it is a theme that attracts every one. People are continually asking me: "Teach us something about the art of concentration." The art of concentration is to do all things, no matter what they may be, with wholeness of vision. One who is concentrated, if someone gives him a minute task, an insignificant duty, he does not say, "This is beneath me." On the contrary, he takes great delight in it; he shows at once how skillfully he can do it, and in this way, he gains mastery over himself and over all situations. Difficulties always fade away from us when we face them, and they pursue us when we turn our back.

"For He is the living God and steadfast forever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His domin-

ion shall be even unto the end."

Man loves and man hates. Today he is your friend; tomorrow your foe—perhaps without any fault on your part. It is the changeable, mortal nature. That is the reason we are called mortals. Those who have come closer to the divine kingdom, in them we find That which is unshakable. "For He is the Living God and steadfast forever." Wise men, under all circumstances, in good times or in bad, fasten their heart to that one Principle. They are not like the majority of people who pray only when they are in difficulty—when they are sick or in danger. They do not bargain and barter with God's grace.

It is the sign of wisdom to form a steadfast habit; then, if we begin the day with nervousness, with haste or irritation, the sheer habit will remind us to hold to our greater purpose; and, at once, the cloud, the little distraction, the confusion will be dispelled. This effort to keep in tune is of itself the way we form the habit of steadfastness. But it requires courage. Those who have no stamina, no backbone, can never accomplish it. Always they find excuses for their failures. Whatever we try to do, there will be people to discourage us. We form a resolution and someone persuades us that it is a mistake, and at once we drop it. For whose sake? That same individual, is he going to be responsible for our dissolution? Is he going to rescue us when we are helpless? In this world, there are plenty of people with idle tongues, who have not gained any steadfastness, who have no anchor, but who seek to influence the lives of others. They only succeed in making the world more unsteady.

Be yourself steadfast. Find something fundamental, and hold to it. Christ said, "First seek ye the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added

unto you." Take that as a hypothesis. Work it out in your own way. You can have something definite and unchanging in your life, which will make your life also unchanging; and, again, you can dwell in crooked thoughts, weak thoughts—thoughts which will create a contrary result. The man who is constantly condemning himself, who is full of self-reproach, who feels that he is not dependable, and cannot depend on anyone else, such a man comes to look upon the world as a very miserable place; and soon his state of mind is reflected even in his physical body, and affects all who come in contact with him.

Thoughts, prayers, our spiritual dreams—I am using the word "dream" in its poetic sense—have their abiding influence. A lofty sentiment, a great ideal, something high and holy that we contact, even in a dream of the night, leaves its lingering perfume with us. We are inspired and sustained by it throughout the day. Herein lies the real principle of prayer, of devotion. I have no use for just the sentimental observance of this or that. We must make our contact with the fundamental—that which touches your soul, and by means of which we can touch other souls. Sometimes unconsciously a human soul inspired with divine principles will give its radiance, its strength, its inspiration. So do not think that it is only when we are actually engaged in some charitable or spiritual work that we are doing our utmost. It is the life—its light, its fragrance. You cannot hide it. If you have it, no one can resist it; if you do not have it, you cannot impose it on any one, however much you may strive to do so.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the love of God."

These ideas we can make very vague. A fanatical man can talk about working for the Lord and yet be all the time

thinking of himself, or be actuated by selfish desires. It is not the talking; it is the silent action that speaks. You don't have to tell everybody what your faith is. In India they have a custom that I have always liked: The Brahmanas, and the followers of the different sects, place marks on their foreheads to distinguish them. This may seem to you merely a superstition; it did to me until lately, when a very beneficent interpretation came to me: Man can carry upon his forehead the mark of Truth, of holiness, of purity of character, of nobility. His very countenance will reveal the whole story of his life, so that he will not need to be introduced to any one. Your benign thoughts, your expression, your smile, your glance—these can express a volume in unspoken words. There is less danger for misunderstanding. We know when we start to argue with someone on religious beliefs, and that person does not agree, what confusion there is. Sometimes, also, we have a feeling that we do not believe in anything. But when we come face to face with a life dedicated, consecrated, so like a crystal that it shines, all confusion vanishes; all doubts are answered and we are filled with inspiration. Here lies the real spiritual province.

Every time I have an opportunity to speak to you, I lay emphasis on this one point, because it is that which enriches our own life, and is the only thing that enables us to reach the lives of the people of the world. You meet someone on the street car, the train or the sidewalk, and you leave an impression. You do not know it. How wonderful, if it is a radiant, living impression, full of spiritual magnitude! Be like that. Never think that you are impoverished, or that your mission is petty and small. Feel that you are appointed by the Divine Hand. As you think this, your power will increase; you will do ever more and more.

In hours of despondency you will be a help to yourself, and you will be able to extend that help to others. Begin to-day; tomorrow you will see the result; that is, if you are steadfast.

THE PILGRIM AND THE GANGES*

By F. W. Bain

There lived formerly in a certain country a very stupid Brahman householder, who inadvertently committed a deadly sin. And his spiritual adviser told him that his guilt could be cleansed and his sin atoned for, only by going and spending the remainder of his life bathing in the Ganges.

So he handed over his goods to his son, and set out, with his pot and staff, on his pilgrimage to the Ganges. And, after travelling for some days, he came to the bank of a small mountain streamlet, whose waters in the hot season were all but dry. And he said to himself: Doubtless this is the sacred Ganges. So he took up his abode on the banks of that stream, bathing every day in such water as he could find. And thus he remained for five years.

Then one day there passed by that way a Pashupata[1] ascetic. And he said to the Brahman: My son, what are you doing here? So he replied: Reverend Sir, I am performing penance, for the expiation of sin, on the banks of the Ganges. Then the ascetic said: What has this miserable puddle to do with the Ganges? And the Brahman said: Is this, then, not the Ganges? And the ascetic laughed in his face, and said: Truly, old as I am I did not think that there had been folly like this in the world. Wretched man, who has deluded you? The Ganges is

* From "A Digit of the Moon," published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London.

[1] A particular follower of Siva.

hundreds of miles away, and resembles this contemptible brook no more than Mount Méru resembles an ant-hill.

Then the Brahman said: Reverend Sir, I am much obliged to you. And taking his pot and staff, he went forward, till at length he came to a broad river. And he rejoiced greatly, saying: This must be the sacred Ganges! So he settled on its bank, and remained there for five years, bathing every day in its waters.

Then one day there came by a Kapalika,[1] who said to him: Why do you remain here, wasting pracious time over a river of no account or sanctity, instead of going to the Ganges? But the Brahman was amazed, and said: And is this, then, not the Ganges? Then the Kapalika replied: This the Ganges! Is a jackal a lion, or a Chandala[2] a Brahman? Sir, you are dreaming.

Then the Brahman said sorrowfully: Worthy Kapalika, I am indebted to you. Fortunate was our meeting. And taking his pot and staff, he went forward, till at length he came to the Nermada. And thinking: Here, at last, is the sacred Ganges; he was overjoyed. And he remained on its bank for five years, bathing every day in its waters.

But one day he observed, on the bank near him, a pilgrim like himself, casting flowers into the river, and calling it by its name. So he went up to him and said: Sir, what is the name of this river? And the pilgrim answered: Is it possible that you do not know the holy Nermada? Then the Brahman sighed deeply. And he said: Sir, I am enlightened by you. And he took his pot and staff, and went forward.

But he was now very old and feeble. And long penance had weakened his frame and exhausted his energies. And as he toiled on in the heat of the day over the burning

[1] Another sect of Siva worshippers.
[2] The lowest of all the castes.

earth, the sun beat on his head like the thunderbolt of Indra, and struck him with fever. Still he gathered himself together and struggled on, growing weaker and weaker day by day, till at last he could go no further, but fell down and lay dying on the ground. But, collecting all his remaining strength, with a last desperate effort he dragged himself up a low hill in front of him. And lo! there before him rolled the mighty stream of the Ganges, with countless numbers of pilgrims doing penance on its banks and bathing in its stream. And in his agony he cried aloud: O Mother Ganges! alas! alas! I have pursued you all my life, and now I die here helpless in sight of you. So his heart broke, and he never reached its shore.

But when he got to the other world, Yama (Judge of the dead) said to Chitragupta (his recorder): What is there down against him? And Chitragupta said: I find against him a terrible sin. But that he has expiated by fifteen years' penance on the banks of the Ganges.

Then that Brahman was amazed, and said: Lord, you are mistaken. I never reached the Ganges.

And Yama smiled.

Humility is the perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted or vexed, irritable or sore, to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised it is to have a blessed home in myself where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my Father in secret and be at peace, as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around is troubled. —*Anonymous.*

I think the first virtue is to restrain the tongue. He is nearest the gods who knows how to be silent even though he is in the right. —*Cato, the younger.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

So go ahead, my children, and never lose sight of your ideal! Go onward and never stop until you have reached the Goal.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

It is only by perseverance and tenaciousness that any object can be attained. "Impossible" is a word to be found only in the dictionary of fools.

—*Napoleon Bonaparte.*

A poor man watched a thousand years before the gate of Paradise. Then, while he snatched one little nap, it opened and shut.

—*From the Persian.*

Follow resolutely the one straight path before you . . . let neither obstacles nor temptations induce you to leave it; bound along if you can, if not, on hands and knees follow it, perish in it if needful.

—*George Borrow.*

For they can conquer who believe they can.

—*Virgil.*

Thus ever keeping himself steadfast, the Yogi of subdued mind attains eternal peace and freedom, which abide in Me.

—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

No great thing is created suddenly any more than a bunch of grapes or a fig. If you tell me that you desire a fig, I answer you that there must be time. Let it first blossom, then bear fruit, then ripen.

—*Epictetus.*

Go on bravely. Do not expect success in a day or a year. Always hold on to the highest. Be steady. Avoid jealousy and selfishness. Be obedient and eternally faithful to the cause of truth, humanity, and your country, and you will move the world. —*Swami Vivekananda.*

TRUE EDUCATION

By K. F. Sherwood

A definition of an educated man was once given as follows: one who knows something about everything and everything about something. It appears that it would take a life-time to reach this point of perfection; for everything about something means a great deal today, when the facilities for finding out are so vast; the accumulated knowledge so immense; and the something about everything is still more impossible, for the same reasons.

But is this, after all, the real idea of education? The word itself means a drawing out, not a putting in; yet the methods used seem to have been in the line of the latter rather than the former. Professor John Dewey of Columbia University, who has written so much along this line, says of this idea of drawing out that it is excellent, if we mean it in contrast with the idea of pouring in. Then he proceeds to confuse it with the activity of the child, maintaining that the child is already spilling over with activity to such an extent that it is unnecessary to draw it from him, not recognizing that there is something deeper than activity that is meant—the drawing out of the real Self of the child, the individual. And we may say at once that this is the object, or should be, of all true education. This *is* education.

Of what use is it to learn about the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the history of man—all those things that some day must pass away—if in the learning there is not the recognition of that which underlies all manifestation, be it in the natural world or in the human, and is related to the individual, helping him to evolve or drawing out that which is already involved in his being? Is education only something that goes on for a few years of life to prepare us for another few years, or is it a continual process through-

out the entire life, and through many lives? Is it not life itself? For what other purpose are we here? This same Professor Dewey says this elsewhere, in fact. He contends that education is not a preparation for life; it *is* life. That is, it is the drawing out into external manifestation of that which we are, the evolving of that which is involved in our real being. We must, then, distinguish between the process and the thing itself. The true education is the drawing out or from, the unfolding of, the life within; the process of education is that which facilitates that out-drawing.

No system of giving the first impulse to children has been so greatly misunderstood as the Kindergarten, the system of Froebel; and I doubt if many people, with the exception of those who intend to become teachers of Kindergarten, have ever had the curiosity to read Froebel's book, "The Education of Man," which gives the philosophy underlying his principles. On visiting one of the schools inspired by him, we notice an almost sentimental attitude between teacher and pupil, a kind of artificial sweetness it seems. What is there here to suggest a deep, underlying philosophy? Yet it is there, and is intended to be lived and understood by the teacher, and unconsciously imparted to the child by contact, by example, and by means of the songs, games, and what are called "gifts"—the material for making things, and for coming into relationship through touch.

Now what is this philosophy? Froebel says in the beginning of his book: "An eternal law acts and rules in all. An all-working, self-animating, self-knowing, therefore eternally existing unity necessarily lies at the foundation of this all-ruling law. This unity is God. All has proceeded from God; in God is the sole origin of all things. All rests, lives, exists in God and through God. All things exist only because the Divine works in them. The Divine which works

in each thing is the nature of each thing. The destiny, as well as the vocation, of all things is to represent their nature through development, and thus the Divine in them; to make known and manifest God in the outward and transitory things.

"The divine in man, his nature therefore, is to be—and must be—developed to consciousness by education; and man must be raised to free, conscious living in accordance with the Divine, thus to free representation of the Divine which acts within him. Education in its totality is to raise to consciousness in man, and to make efficient in life, the fact that man and Nature proceeded from God, are limited by Him, and rest in Him. Education is to guide man to clearness about himself and in himself, to peace with Nature, and to union with God; therefore, it is to raise man to the recognition of himself and of humanity, to the recognition of God and Nature, and to the pure, holy life thereby conditioned."

He says again: "So the man, and humanity in man, must be viewed as an outside appearance, must be viewed not as already become perfect, not as fixed and stationary, but as constant, yet always progressively developing; eternally living, yet always advancing from one stage of development to another, and toward the aim resting in the Supreme and Eternal."

Is it not magnificent, such an ideal? Can it be surpassed? It goes back to the year 1839, but in its essence reaches back as far as man can go, even to the time of the great Rishis of India, and no one knows exactly when they lived. It is known, however, that these ideas did not originate with them.

Truth is ever being rediscovered by those who have risen to the plane of that discovery. We say "discovered," we

might say "uncovered," for as we lift the veil of ignorance in ourselves, there it is. Today, some of the educators are trying to say the same things, or are at least groping toward these same ideals, but, like the crab, they are in some cases working backward, going from outside in—the Western method, not bad but differing from that of the East, which is from inside outward. Truly, "East is East and West is West!" It must be so. Are not the east wind and the west different, yet both good? And does not one touch of Nature make the whole world kin—which means related? Let us beware of half-truths. "When half-gods go the gods arrive," and so it is with half-truths. When we let them go, the Truth appears. When the Light of Truth shines, half-truths vanish.

We shall see later on that thousands of years ago in a far-away country these ideas were at the foundation of the life of a great civilization, whose marvelous philosophy is reaching us today through new channels. But we cannot yet leave Froebel and his teaching. What we have read from his book seems a far cry from songs and games and what are called the "gifts," by which the mind is trained through the activity of the hand; yet he maintains that those are the first steps toward just the unfoldment which he pictures, although useless unless the principles underlying them are firmly in the mind of the teacher. Here, as always, "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." There is the secret. These things are only the process of education. And what does he say of the teachers? He says:

"All true educators must at each instant, in all requirements and designs, be at the same time two-sided, giving and taking, uniting and separating, dictating and following, acting and enduring, deciding and setting free, fixed and movable; and the pupil must be so also." They must represent

what they teach. They must have the spirit if they would impart it.

Probably no one today is trying to say these things better than is Professor Dewey. One reads of new schools being established where the effort is being made gently to lead the evolving ego to a consciousness of itself and its surrounding world; first, through individual contact with things, and then—when the end has been reached of what can be learned in that way—through books, where are recorded the results of research and study by minds which have gone farther in the same lines. What one finds, however, in all these efforts is a sudden coming up against a wall that is impenetrable, just because of a lack of knowledge of a few fundamental facts of life—facts which have been accepted by a great portion of the human race, but owing to certain conditions, have until recently been either unknown or unheeded.

Some time ago, the following was published in well-known evening paper: "Dr. Herbert H. Gowen, professor of Oriental literature and history in the University of Washington, just returned from a tour of the Orient, says that Western thought and civilization lack much which Oriental civilization can offer, and that the more he learns of what the Far East represents, the more he is convinced that the two civilizations should be combined into a harmonious whole."

This is undoubtedly what is happening today. We must be very dull if we do not see it. East and West are exchanging their wares as never before. The purely material commerce has existed for many years. Now there is coming an exchange of a different kind, to the great advantage of the West, and, let us hope, not to the disadvantage of the East.

We have said that true education is a drawing out of that which is already within. How can we properly accomplish this without a recognition of the nature of the within? How can we deal with the many unexpected events in this development, so long as we think of the child as a product of heredity, a new growth as it were; and of children merely as children? Dewey says in his introduction to "A Mother's Letters to a Schoolmaster": "It is becoming clear that children are in many ways much older than we have been wont to assume. They are almost 'all there' much earlier than we have been willing to recognize. And if this be so, then our attempts to reform the race are commonly so belated as partially to explain our disappointments."

To reform the race, and to do so through education—this is his object, and the object of so many of our best thinkers. The education of the past having failed—the education which should be called more properly the process of information, necessary and valuable as far as it goes—this having failed, they are turning to something else. It is a great step. If this one professor can admit that children are "almost all there" much earlier than we think, it is not far to the idea that the soul has had a body at some previous time, and will have one again; that all life is a school wherein we learn our lessons of experience, which are the real educators, and that no matter how many teachers we have, the Great Teacher is within, and until That is awakened, all other teachers may strive in vain. This is why the real teacher is necessary, not the one who imparts information—the instructor—although he, too, is valuable, but the one who is himself awakened to the real life, and can awaken others. If these two qualifications are combined, then is the pupil fortunate; and if the pupil is awakened, then is the teacher fortunate.

There is a book by C. H. Henderson called "What Is It To Be Educated?" which deals most beautifully with these subjects. It says:

"The object of education is to get at a man's soul, to set up changes in it, to make it larger and freer. It can only do this by penetrating at once to his real Self. Anything less profound is mere surface skirmishing, and is not education. In dealing with men at large, education must deal with that part of them which is most genuine and most vital, that is to say, with their religion." And again: "The first step in the art of teaching is, to set up in our own inner life precisely those changes which we desire to bring about in the inner life of our children." In others words, we cannot teach what is only hearsay. Information can be given, facts may be stated, but even these must be believed to be true by the one presenting them, if they are to carry weight. Real teaching, however, must be lived in order to be imparted. This same Mr. Henderson says farther:

"Education is an inner process; it has to do with the essential things of the Spirit; it cannot be accomplished except through the Spirit." Finally he writes: "Education is the unfolding and perfecting of the human spirit." He quotes an old Spanish educator who says:

"To educate is not to give a trade for making one's living, but to temper the soul for life." And he adds: "In a word, I mean by education an inner process, a spiritual growth, a redemption of the very fibre; but I shall also mean, and always, a change brought about through a genuine and accurate knowledge of the great outer world of men and things." So we have the true education and the process distinguished. He holds, as does Froebel, that "the art of educating children is not the same as the art of educating oneself, but the two must go hand in hand. It is

the only way to accomplish anything vital and genuine. They must travel together, the teacher and the taught." Every teacher knows not only the joy but the inspiration that comes when, through the process of education, the true education begins to show itself, and there is from the child a response, which draws out more and more from the teacher, consciously or unconsciously.

Religion, then, is to be the basis of this education, but how can it be, so long as religions are confused with religion itself, so long as dogmas not understood are confused with spiritual realities? Can there ever be a world religion, as some educators dream? Henderson says:

"Deeper than any particular belief is that Universal Religion, which is not a creed, not a barrier; but the inner possession of every human heart, the impulse to serve others and purify self. This is what we mean when we say that education, to be valid, must be founded upon religion."

Swami Paramananda brings out continually this same fundamental idea, that the true spirit of religion is universal. We are familiar with the Swami's teaching, but I shall give his own words:

"I quote these Western writers to show that these ideas are working both in East and West, that the old and the new are coming together in perfect harmony. Can we not have that spirit of tolerance that has been preached so long from this platform and belongs to the Indo-Aryan race, whose great Scripture, the Rig Veda, states that 'Truth is One; men call it by various names'?"

Swami Vivekananda has said: "My friends, my plan is to start institutions in India to train our young men, to make them preachers of the truths of our Scriptures, inside India and outside India. Men strong and sincere to the backbone, vigorous and believing young men are wanted; everything

else will be ready. A hundred such, and the world becomes revolutionized!"

And Jesus the Christ said: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; all these things shall be added unto you."

This does not mean that by seeking the inner kingdom we shall have all knowledge of history and mathematics, and every material advantage; but it means that this seeking is the foundation—the development of that life which is hid with Christ in God; and that, beginning with this which is our real life, the outer things can be mastered. For there is an inner life of everything, and the world becomes interesting only when we realize that fact and work accordingly.

How did the great Master, Socrates, give his teaching? Was it didactic? Quite the contrary. Did he not say to his students, if we may call them such: "I now proceed to my argument. Do you, however, if you will be persuaded by me, pay little attention to Socrates, but much more to the Truth. If I appear to you to say anything true, assent to it; but if not, oppose me with all your might, taking good care that in my zeal I do not deceive both myself and you, and, like a bee, depart, leaving my sting behind."

He made a contact with his pupils. They might ask him questions, but he, in turn, would ask them questions and make them think for themselves and eventually bring out the facts or the truth which it was Socrates' aim to show them.

"Let us examine this question," he would say. "Let us consider whether or not the souls of men exist in the next world after death, thus."

Then he would proceed to a few preliminary considerations, always asking his pupil if this were not so.

"Which kind of existence do you think, from our for-

mer and our present arguments, that the soul is more like and more akin to?"

"I think, Socrates," replied Cebes, "that after this inquiry the very dullest man would agree that the soul is infinitely more like the unchangeable than the changeable."

"And the body?" said Socrates.

"That is like the changeable."

"Then which is the soul like?"

"That is quite plain, Socrates; the soul is like the divine, and the body like the mortal."

And so he led them on until they were really ready to listen while he explained to them concerning the soul and its incarnations; and when his pupils disagreed with him, he encouraged them to do so—just as the teachers of India did in the past—and eventually showed them wherein their error lay.

If, then, true education is an inner process, a drawing out of the life of the Spirit and letting it manifest on the plane of matter, the Kingdom coming on earth as it is in heaven, this process of questioning is in line with it. It is not the questioning used in examinations as they exist today, an examination of how much information has been retained. It is not in line with sitting at a desk so many hours a day, or of getting through a certain amount of work in a given time. It implies and necessitates endless patience on the part of the teacher, and freedom on the part of the pupil.

How was it in India in the days of India's greatness? We are told that the student went to live with or near his teacher, that he served him with devotion, and it was left to the teacher when to impart his wisdom; for it was wisdom that was imparted rather than knowledge. In the "Code of Manu" we may read: "As he who digs deep with a spade comes to a spring of water, so the student, who

humbly serves his teacher, attains to the knowledge which lies deep in his teacher's mind." This service was a part of the teaching. It was an opening, a preparation that made a contact which was necessary for the imparting, and it was wisdom that was imparted, and wisdom is divine. It belongs to that divine Supreme Nature that is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute(which is wimdom), and Bliss Absolute, and so is at the foundation of life. Is not this method like the old system of apprenticeship which, when it existed, produced creative artists whose work today is the envy and admiration of all connoiseurs?

India today is reviving her ancient ideals in every way, and, while taking what the West has to offer in material progress, is not blind to the fact that her own ideals are best for her, in self-dependence and in the foundations of Religious Truth. Some of us are awakening to the fact that these same ideals may be good for us too; that our material Frankensteins are crushing the souls of our people; that while we are criticising fixity of caste rule in the East, we are being burdened by a fixity of organization in the West, and the wise ones amongst us are trying to find a way out of the difficulty.

It has been said that a corporation is a body without a soul. That is so about many organizations. They are bodies without souls, and as such are bound to go to pieces. We are living today in a period of destruction and re-formation, a wonderful period. All periods are such, to a certain extent, for material life is a continual breaking down and building up. As St. Paul said: "In the midst of life we are in death." But there come periods in the world's history when great changes take place, and it seems as if we were now passing through one of those changes.

Those of us who are permitted a glimpse, however small,

of what this means must be courageous and strong in standing by and for what we see as the Truth, lighting our little lamps from the greater lights, and trying to keep them burning. Only thus can we help forward the movement which is in the direction of that True Education—the development of the life of the Spirit, the only life that is eternal.

THE CUP

(Sermon of Hermes to his son Tat. Egyptian teaching. Date unknown. Translated by G. R. S. Mead.)

From Hermes Trismegistus

Hermes. With Reason (*Logos*), not with hands, did the World-maker make the universal world, so that thou thus shouldst think of Him as everywhere and ever-being, the Author of all things, and One and Only, who by His Will all beings hath created.

This Body of Him is a thing no man can touch, or see, or measure—a Body inextensible, like to no other frame. 'Tis neither Fire nor Water, Air nor Breath; yet all of them come from it. Now, being Good, He willed to consecrate this Body to Himself alone, and set its Earth in order and adorn it.[1]

So down to Earth He sent the Cosmos[2] of this Frame Divine[3]—man, a life that cannot die, and yet a life that dies. And o'er all other lives and over Cosmos too, did man excel by reason of the Reason (*Logos*) and the Mind. For contemplator of God's works did man become; he marvelled and did strive to know their Author.

---

[1] The whole is a play on the word "Kosmos," which means "order," "ornament," and "world." I have tried to retain it in English by using both meanings.

[2] That is, "Order."

[3] That is, the Body of God, the One Element.

Reason (*Logos*) indeed, O Tat, among all men hath He distributed, but Mind not yet; not that He grudgeth any, for grudging cometh not from Him, but hath its place below, within the souls of men who have no Mind.

Tat. Why then did God, O father, not on all bestow a share of Mind?

Hermes. He willed, my son, to have it set up in the midst for souls, just as it were a prize.

Tat. And where hath He had it set up?

Hermes. He filled a mighty Cup[1] with it, and sent it down, joining a Herald to it, to whom He gave command to make this proclamation to the hearts of men:

Baptize[2] thyself with this Cup's baptism, what heart can do so, thou that hast faith thou canst ascend to Him that hath sent down the Cup, thou that dost know for what thou didst come into being!

As many then as understood the Herald's tidings and doused themselves in Mind, became partakers in the Gnosis; and when they had "received the Mind," they were made "perfect men."

But they who do not understand the tidings, these, since they possess the aid of Reason only and not Mind, are ignorant wherefore they have come into being and whereby.

The senses of such men are like irrational creatures; and as their whole make-up is in their feelings and their impulses, they fail in all appreciation of those things which really are worth contemplation. These centre all their thought upon the pleasures of the body and its appetites, in the belief that for its sake man hath come into being.

But they who have received some portion of God's gift,[3]

[1] Lit. a crater or mixing-bowl.

[2] The meaning of this term is not to "sprinkle" with water, but to "plunge the whole body" into water.

[3] Sc. the Mind.

these, Tat, if we judge by their deeds, have from Death's bonds won their release; for they embrace in their own Mind all things—things on the earth, things in the heaven, and things above the heaven, if there be aught. And, having raised themselves so far they sight the Good; and have sighted It, they look upon their sojourn here as a mischance; and in disdain of all, both things in body and the bodiless, they speed their way unto that One and Only One.

This is, O Tat, the Gnosis of the Mind, vision of things Divine; God-knowledge is it, for the Cup is God's.

Tat. Father, I, too, would be baptized.

Hermes. Unless thou shalt first hate thy body, son, thou canst not love thy Self. But if thou lov'st thy Self thou shalt have Mind, and, having Mind, thou shalt share in the Gnosis.

Tat. Father, what dost thou mean?

Hermes. It is not possible, my son, to give thyself to both—I mean, to things that perish and to things divine. For, seeing that existing things are twain, Body and Bodiless, in which the perishing and the divine are understood, the man who hath the will to choose is left the choice of one or other; for it can never be the twain should meet. And in those souls to whom the choice is left, the waning of the one causes the other's growth to show itself.

Now the choosing of the Better not only proves a lot most fair for him who makes the choice, seeing it makes the man a god, but also shows his piety to God. Whereas the choosing of the Worse, although it doth destroy the "man," it only doth disturb God's harmony to this extent, that as processions pass by in the middle of the way, without being able to do anything but take the road from others, so do such men move in procession through the world, led by their bodies' pleasures.

This being so, O Tat, what comes from God hath been and will be ours; but that which is dependent on ourselves, let this press onward and have no delay; for 'tis not God, 'tis we who are the cause of evil things, preferring them to good.

Thou see'st, son, how many are the bodies through which we have to pass, how many are the choirs of daimones, how vast the system of the star-courses through which our path doth lie, to hasten to the One and Only God.

For to the Good there is no other shore; It hath no bounds; It is without an end; and for Itself It is without beginning, too, though unto us It *seemeth* to have one—the Gnosis.

Therefore to It Gnosis is no beginning; rather is it that Gnosis doth afford to *us* the first beginning of *Its being known.*

Let us lay hold, therefore, of the beginning, and quickly speed through all we have to pass.

'Tis very hard to leave the things we have grown used to, which meet our gaze on every side, and turn ourselves back to the Old, Old Path.

Appearances delight us, whereas things which appear not make their believing hard.

Now evils are the more apparent things, whereas the Good can never show Itself unto the eyes, for It hath neither form nor figure.

Therefore the Good is like Itself alone, and unlike all things else; for 'tis impossible that That which hath no body should make Itself apparent to a body.

The "Like's" superiority to the "Unlike" and the "Unlike's" inferiority unto the "Like" consist in this:

The Oneness[1] being Source and Root of all, is in all things

[1] The Monad, that is the Good.

as Root and Source. Without this, Source is naught; whereas the Source Itself is from naught but Itself, since It is Source of all the rest. It is Itself Its Source, since It may have no other Source.

The Oneness then being Source, containeth every number, but is contained by none; engendereth every number, but is engendered by no other one.

Now all that is engendered is imperfect, it is divisible, to increase subject and to decrease; but with the Perfect One none of these things doth hold. Now that which is increasable increases from the Oneness, but succumbs through its own feebleness when it no longer can contain the One.

And now, O Tat, God's Image[1] hath been sketched for thee, as far as it can be; and if thou wilt attentively dwell on it, and observe it with thy heart's eyes, believe me, son, thou'lt find the Path that leads above; nay, that Image shall become thy Guide itself, because the Sight Divine hath this peculiar charm, it holdeth fast and draweth unto it those who succeed in opening their eyes, just as, they say, the magnet draweth iron.

[1] The Universal Cosmos or Monad.

When a fire is strong the wind cannot quench it, but rather makes it stronger. So when a soul loves God as it were in play, its fire of love is quenched like a tiny candle with the first breath of wind that reaches it. But true love grows amid trials, for the more there comes to be borne, the greater the strength it gathers together to bear it; and if it be of God, it conquers all trials—no water is sufficient to quench the fire which has come from heaven.

—*Juan de Avila.*

TURNING AWAY FROM SELF

From the letters of Shaikh Sharfuddin Maneri

(An Indian Sufi living in the latter part of the 14th Century.)

Taubah literally means to turn back. But the nature of the turning must be different with different individuals, according to the difference in their conditions and stages. Ordinary people would turn from sin with apology, in order to escape punishment; middling ones would turn from their deeds to secure the regard of the Master; the Elect would turn from all worlds, here and hereafter, and feel the insignificance and non-existence thereof in order to realize the glory of the Maker. The turning of a beginner cannot be permanent. A saint says of himself: "I turned back seventy times and failed each time; but my seventy-first turning proved steady, and I failed no more."

The real *Taubah* lies in turning from one's nature. When the disciple turns from his nature, he becomes another; *i.e.*, he does not become another man, but his qualities change. Then he unfolds true *Iman,* (peace, faith, or moral sense) which sweeps away many-ness and leads to unity. Ere the turning, *Iman* is but conventional and nominal. "How long wilt thou worship God with thy tongue only? This is no better than worshipping desires. So long as thou dost not become a Moslem from *within,* how canst thou be a Moslem merely from *without?*"

When a man calls himself a disciple, he ought to justify the title to the fullest extent and firmly tread the straight Path. He should constantly use the collyrium of turning back (*Taubah*); put on the robe of detachment from connections and from self; drink the wine of Seeking out of the cup of Purity; draw the sword of Magnanimity from the sheath of Religion; dismiss the cravings of the infidel Desire; practice absorption, and not care for the higher or the lower

worlds. When he has become proficient in the truths of discipleship and the subtleties of Seeking; has gathered the fruits of purification and asceticism; begun to tread the Path, and passed through several stages of the journey—then, if asked whether he is a disciple, he can say: "I may be one, God helping." Thus is discipleship justified, and pretensions avoided. . . . The beginner has a tongue, the proficient scholar is silent.

When the mirror of the heart is cleansed of impurities, it becomes capable of reflecting the supersensuous lights. They appear in the beginning as flashes, but gain in power and volume as the heart becomes purer—manifesting gradually as the lamp, the flame, the stars, the moon, and the sun. The forms of flashes arise from ablutions and prayers; those of the lamp, the flame, and the stars, from the partial purity of the heart; that of the full moon, from its perfect purity; that of the sun, from the Soul reflecting its glory in the perfectly purified heart.

A time comes when the inner light is a thousand times more luminous than the external sun. Sometimes, when the purity of the heart is complete, the seer sees the True One within him, if he looks within; the True One without him, if he looks to the universe. When the Divine Light is reflected in the light of the soul, the vision gives bliss. When the Divine Light shines without the media of the soul and the heart, the vision manifests formlessness and infinity, uniqueness and harmony, the basis and support of all existence. Here there is neither rising nor setting; neither right nor left; neither up nor down; neither space nor time; neither far nor near; neither night nor day; neither heaven nor earth. Here the pen breaks; the tongue falters; intellect sinks into nothingness; intelligence and knowledge miss the way in the wilderment of amazement.

REPORT

CALIFORNIA

The activities at the beautiful Ananda-Ashrama of La Crescenta, California, have been faithfully carried on by the devoted and consecrated workers of the Ashrama. Sister Daya has conducted the usual Sunday Services which are held out-of-doors except when the weather makes it necessary to have them in the Temple itself. Sister Daya, with her earnest and devout spirit always brings inspiration to her listeners who are ever proving their interest by their faithful attendance. The influence of the Ananda-Ashrama is not limited to the public Services only. Visitors often make their pilgrimage to this hill-top shrine and express their enthusiasm and appreciation of its beauty and atmosphere. The guest-house connected with the Ashrama has also brought rest and soul refreshment to those who have come there for a time of retreat.

At the Vedanta Centre, 745 West Adams Street, Los Angeles, where Library, Reading Room, and Publication Departments are located, Sister Daya gives a Sunday Evening Service and a Thursday Study Class for the public.

It has been necessary for Swami Paramananda to be absent from California for several months but he is expected before long to return to California and resume his usual activities.

BOSTON

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston, all the Services and Classes have been carried on throughout the summer months without interruption. Since June, Swami Paramananda has given special practical talks every Tuesday evening. The first series he gave was on "Bible and Vedanta," then at the request of different members he has spoken on "Value of the Knowledge of Reincarnation," "Aids to Meditation,"

"Power of Right Thought," "Can We Influence Our Destiny?" "Poise," etc.; while at the Sunday morning and evening Services there has been shown a steady increase in attendance. The special feature of the summer months has been marked by a constant influx of out-of-town visitors.

The Saturday afternoon visit to Cohasset-Ashrama has brought great rest and refreshment to many during the summer months. Apart from the four-o'clock Service under the pine trees and the sunset Service on the Rock, the Hindu dinner prepared and served by Srimati Charushila Devi has given the visitors a special sense of fellowship and deep satisfaction. This Hindu sister, by her beautiful character and spirit of selfless service, has drawn many to her and thus has created a profound spirit of understanding between East and West, with a sense of deep kinship.

It is with deep satisfaction that we are happy to announce that within another month the winter house and studio at Cohasset which has been under construction for several months will be completed and our regular Ashrama Saturday will be conducted there during the winter months. We are not able to definitely set the date for its dedication but possibly it will take place the last Saturday in October.

IMPORTANT

We are happy to announce that Dr. James H. Cousins, the eminent interpreter of India, her art, literature and life, will be our honored guest at the regular Thursday evening dinner at the Vedanta Centre, on October 16th, at seven o'clock. Dr. Cousins has just returned from India, and will speak and answer questions on this occasion. He will also deliver an address at the Centre on Sunday, the 19th, at 3.30 P. M.

Please make your dinner reservations early, either by writing to the Secretary, Vedanta Centre, 32 Fenway, or by calling Kenmore 3692.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER, 1930

Our Divine Birthright

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"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
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OUR DIVINE BIRTHRIGHT

By Swami Paramananda

THIS morning I want to give you thoughts which may prove of practical value—wholesome, abiding thoughts which we can carry with us as we go about fulfilling our day's round of duties—thoughts which will serve as a reminder to us of our Divine birthright.

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

The only one who can give an interpretation of this text is the individual himself; and the only way that he can glorify the Father, the Ideal, the basic Principle, is not by creed or dogma, or by the repetition of a phrase, but by doing, living, being.

"If a person could be persuaded of this principle as he ought, that we are all descended from God and that He is the Father of gods and men, I conceive he never would think meanly or degenerately concerning himself."

Epictetus tells us this, and in the great Hindu Scripture, the Katha Upanishad, we read: "The Self is subtler than the subtle, greater than the great; it dwells in the heart of each living being. He who is free from desire and free from

grief, with mind and senses tranquil, beholds the glory of the Atman. . . . The wise who know the Self, bodiless, seated within perishable bodies, great and all-pervading, grieve not."

Very difficult it is for us to believe this, especially at those moments when we see nothing but our failures, our impediments, our imperfections, and our shortcomings. That is why I am asking you to remind yourselves, to remind each other of this fundamental great fact, so that you can minimize the onslaught of evil. This onslaught we all experience. It comes to us in the form of depression, in the form of doubt, in the form of suspicion, and, in a more destructive aspect, in the form of anger and hatred; and the only way we can overcome it is to remember the nature of our origin. You may not, however, be able at once to lift up your head and say with conviction: "I am the very image of God!" merely because such a thing has been written in the Bible. Christ said: "Let your light shine!" But He knew that we are all a part of that great Light. The question is, how shall a man follow that command so long as he believes himself a failing, faltering stumbling individual?

"There is one ruler, the Self of all living beings who makes the one form manifold; the wise who perceive Him seated within their Self, to them belongs eternal bliss, not to others."

Words like these fall upon the ears of some of us like beautiful music. There are those who have learned to tune their soul to such a degree that they sing in spite of themselves; nothing can hinder, nothing stop their singing; even in the midst of sorrow they burst out in song. Sorrow has ceased to be sorrow, because it brings them closer to God. A blow, a disappointment, a hardship, these only cause them to remember the Deity. There are other minds, however,

that become enshrouded; they forget their Source, and for them we have to have reminders, just as the practical man right on his desk has a reminder of an indebtedness, bringing daily to his attention the fact that he must make a certain settlement or have a reckoning with the law of the world. The Divine Law does not hold us that way. It does not threaten—"O man, if you do not do this you will be punished." Its reminder is a gentle one, but it rouses us inwardly to a sense of our spiritual responsibility. When we live in entire forgetfulness of our true nature, inevitably we feel the reaction. First, our thoughts become incoherent—not co-ordinated—then our actions fail, and finally our whole being suffers. A tree, when it is not drawing proper nourishment from the soil, its leaves begin to fall and its branches to wither. Same way with our life; when it is not consciously rooted in the soil of the Eternal, it droops; it dies.

The best service, therefore, that we can render ourselves and others is to think those thoughts, speak those words, and perform those acts which will cause us to remember our infinite heritage. In India they had in ancient times, and still have today, a most spontaneous way of reminding themselves of God. A group of people would gather together and chant the Name of one of the Manifestations of Divinity—His compassion, His lovingness, especially toward those who love each other, His beauty, His wisdom, and how absolutely inter-related we are with Him. These songs they would sing, and every one, even a child or a person who was unlettered, could understand. It was not philosophic discussion, but sweet music infusing life, infusing vitality, infusing holy atmosphere into their consciousness.

These things are done very simply. "Be truly as a child. You know children do not trouble themselves with looking forward; they leave that to others and are perfectly con-

tent so long as they are near their father. Do this and you will be at peace." I have said at various times that to pray we need the child heart. It is a beautiful thing to see a child when he is earnestly saying his prayer. He is not thinking of anything else; he is earnestly giving himself to that alone, because his mind is, according to us, as yet unformed, and he is not able to think of many things at a time, as we venture to do. We have learned the world's ways, therefore we scatter our thoughts, but a child forgets all other things in order to think of one; into that he puts his whole thought. And how we love to watch the expression on his face, the feeling, the utter sincerity! We too, at times, become like little children and involuntarily forget ourselves and what a blessing it is!

Just as a man makes himself one with the world, one with his troubles, his cares, his anxieties, so he can make himself one with God. You may be puzzled. What do I mean? Does a man make himself one with his troubles? He does. A disappointment, or perhaps sad news, comes and strikes him. At first it does not altogether prostrate him because it is apart from him, but soon he begins to identify himself with it, and he thinks of it more often than is good for him. Instead of counteracting the condition, he absorbs it. Take a sickness, for instance; when you dwell on it, it becomes more acute. The way to overcome it is to focus your attention on something else—something which interests you. This is not imagination. There are people who demonstrate it every day. There are demands placed on them through duty, so they have to forget their little physical ailments, and often they shake them off. I remember what a gentleman I knew once told me. He was a banker, a very busy man, and could not afford to be laid up. One time he developed a bad cold, and someone said to him, "Why

don't you go to bed and rest?" He replied: "If I do, it will take me that much longer to get well." He did not think that he was applying philosophy or a spiritual principle; it was just plain reasoning, and the simple logic of which we can carry into our everyday life.

It does not do us any good to be told of the evils that we have done, the imprints that have been put upon us by our mistakes. The more we think on these things, the more acute they become, and the larger grows their volume. How often we try to correct those whom we call our friends; but the trouble is, we try in the wrong way: we remind them of their failures, their shortcomings, their limitations. That is exactly what they are—limitations. Why not remind them instead of That which is not limited in their life and nature?

No matter what a man may claim himself to be—atheist, agnostic, or scientist—I think that there is no one who has ever found the way out of facing the facts of life. The very fact that we exist brings to us a problem: the cause of our existence. This problem is right before us; we cannot deny it; we cannot ignore it. What is the cause of our being? Wherefrom does the Light stream forth? A religious man will answer "God;" another, "Truth;" and still another will call it "substance." But what difference does the name make? We know our origin is fixed in the Divine. We may not be able to put this into logical words, or thrust it forcibly upon another, saying, "You have to believe this!" Nor should we do so. We can, however, relate ourselves with that Power, which now we feel vaguely within us as an indefinite quality, and we can do so by means of no other instrument than our own thought. Our thought can be purified; it can be concentrated; it can be directed in a simple way, and thus solve for us the perplexities of life.

Sri Ramakrishna, one of the great teachers of India, was an explorer in the spiritual realm. But he was not satisfied to find his revelation merely along the specific lines of his own religion and faith; he wanted to look into other religions as well. For was it not all of God? Thus, at one time, he turned his attention to Christianity, but when his disciples read to him from the Christian books and Bible, one thing struck him very forcibly: "Why do they dwell so much on sin?" he asked. "In every line there is something about sin and iniquity. If a man constantly dwells on the fact of sin, he will become a sinner. It is better for people to think less of sin and more of virtue, less of evil and more often of the good." He was not a learned man by any means, but what wonderful logic there is here—what simple truth! Religion has nothing to do with sin, except to rescue man from it. When we are seeking God we are not thinking of evil; rather we discard evil and Devil and all such concepts.

So, my friends, when we have difficulties, when the sky of our mind and heart is filled with clouds, doubts, and despondent thoughts, let us remind ourselves of our Divine heritage, and that reminding will come upon us like a ray of the sun. When the sun breaks through the fog and the clouds, we all know how beautiful it looks, how penetrating it is, how at once everything that is of gloom begins to disperse. We experience this often here in California; and in spiritual life we must remember that the Omnipotent Sun has this same power. In our ignorance and our forgetfulness, we may think that we have gone too far away from that Source of Light to receive Its blessing, and that there is no hope for us; one single moment, however, of contact with that Divine Sun will cause every thing that clouds our life to vanish. Let there be, then, a constant effort on our part

to remind ourselves and others of that unfailing Radiance.

We are like fellow-travelers going toward the same goal. One feels fatigue and stumbles; the other lends his helping hand. A thought, a glance, a kind word—these are needed in life to restore our balance, to remind us that we are not just the puny mortals we imagine ourselves to be. To hold the thought that we are not capable of doing this or that, that it is too hard for us, too divine, is not the way for us to pay our tribute to God. Did not Christ say something of the sort concerning those who try with sweet-sounding words to speak in flattering terms: Not those who call me Lord and Master shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father. That is all there is to it. Therein lies the whole of philosophy. It is doing, living, being.

Many times I have heard: "I am not equipped to follow this path; I am too weak, too stupid; I haven't the training." Do not think for a moment that you are not equipped, and as for the training, it is better, perhaps, that we are not trained too richly for this task, so that the Divine Power may come and fill that space within us that has not been filled already by our mental calculations. When mind and heart are full of the world's worries and anxieties, full of suspicion, doubt, hatred and anger, where is the room for prayer or inner communion? That is the reason why often, though we try so hard, we do not succeed. Spiritual attainment means first emptying—emptying. We have to empty ourselves altogether. I do not know how else to express it. By a curious perversity, however, the things which are detrimental to us, which are depriving us of our heritage, are the very things to which we cling. These hands of ours with which we can create, with which we can act, are holding fast to the tinsel of the world. How, then, can they hold the

Real? Things that are harmful to us, that wound us, even these we will not let go. You may ask, "Why should we cling to them?" We hold on to them through our thoughts—our brooding, disappointed, bitter thoughts, and thus they grind into our being, make us forget our spiritual entity.

There is one man very much before the eye of the world today—Mahatma Gandhi—who, no matter what his political philosophy may be, is an outstanding figure spiritually. For this reason it is well that we should consider his thought.

"I observe in the limited field in which I find myself," he says, "that unless I can reach the hearts of men and women, I am able to do nothing. I observe further that so long as the spirit of hate persists in some shape or other, it is impossible to establish peace or to gain our freedom." Surely we know how true this is! All the organizations that people are trying to form to bring about peace and brotherhood—this league and that—are useless while this spirit of hate endures. What is hate? It seems to be inseparable from love, does it not? We find love and hate playing together, like the obverse and reverse of a coin. A man says he feels love for his religion, and almost at the same moment he becomes hateful toward one who does not believe as he does. Strange, that one mind, one heart can hold two elements which are altogether opposite.

There are philosophers who say that hatred does not really exist. One of the great Hindu thinkers called it *Maya, illusion*. People who are weak morally or spiritually, they fall under this evil. It destroys them, of course. You may say, "There have been men, powerful men, who seemed to win through hatred." Anyone who is ever triumphant through hatred, ultimately destroys himself. People of this type sometimes have dragged down a whole nation. I shall not give you any examples; there are plenty of them in the

history of the world—emperors, kings, generals and statesmen, limiting their vision with such thoughts as, "I am going to build up my country! I am going to build up my nation! I am destined to be the great leader of my people." I—I—I—always I! Invariably we find this ego—the evil one. Sometimes it manifests in a genius, along with tremendous power; but the power is misguided, so, as I have said, it brings about its own destruction.

Hate never conquers! Lord Buddha, the Christ, and all Christ-like spirits have given us what amounts to one slogan, expressing this idea: "Hatred is never conquered by hatred; it is conquered by love." Through reason, through logic, we realize the truth of this teaching, but we do not have the strength to apply it. Our determination is brittle; it breaks under the pressure of life. Then, after a time, we begin to realize that in order to attain this ideal, we must draw from some source which is not the little self; we must find a strength, not dependent merely on our muscles, mind and brain, but upon Something which sustains them all. Here we come to the practical aspect of the matter. We begin to meditate; we question: "What is this 'myself?' What is the origin of my life? Am I this flesh, bound by my hands, my feet, my organs, by name and form, or is my real life related to a more divine aspect of being?" Thus, as we go deeper within our own soul, we find That which we cannot describe or define. And we have no desire to do so. In one of the Upanishads there is this passage: "He is beyond mind and speech." Finding Him, man becomes silent.

Wisdom, courage, understanding—these we must have in order to cure ourselves of misunderstanding and wrong understanding. No amount of mere straining of the mind and intellect, however, are going to give us these qualities. How then shall we gain them? Let me remind you again of that

picture of the sun—the rising sun, penetrating and dispelling all gloom. When the sun shines forth on a cloudy day, how glad our hearts are! Our whole life rises up to greet it; even the body feels a new impetus. This morning when I came out, how beautiful everything was—all nature glistened in the sunlight—living, radiant! Same way we become radiant under the rays of that spiritual Sun. In its absence we agonize; we begin to die. It is worse than death to lose our contact with the Divine Being. If we have experienced it even in the smallest measure, it becomes almost impossible for us to live without it. Do not let us be without it. You may, perhaps, think that you do not need it. But when a person comes to you in distress, in agony of soul, what have you to offer? Words of consolation? They will not suffice. They will not ring true. It is only through reality we can reach the heart of grief, or the heart of anything. Did not Christ say something of the sort concerning those who try with sweet-sounding words to speak in flattering terms: Not those who call me Lord and Master shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father. As He said, let your light shine.

Do the great souls ever have any element of fear? Do they ever say: Now I have acquired this treasure, I shall keep it for myself? On the contrary, they live only to share. Lord Buddha, when he finally attained—after the long struggle in which he nearly lost his physical life—became almost intoxicated with joy, ecstatic with vision. Yet, what was his first thought? "I must impart this joy to the whole world, without distinction of caste, creed, or any difference. I must give to every one; to all suffering humanity." And what was the remedy that he brought for that suffering? There is only one remedy: to remind man of his real nature and destiny. Not just by words. When you find one who

is bent on doing an evil, you seldom can change his mind through logic or argument. Very few people have succeeded in doing that. There is something, however, by means of which you can reach him, and that is by the force of your own life and character. Robbers, murderers, evil men often have been redeemed by coming in contact with the great master-spirits, because on seeing them they were reminded of their own divine heritage.

I have spoken today in various ways on this one theme—our origin in that High One—that Eternal. We should remind ourselves of this in humility. In humility we should lay ourselves down, in order that His Power may work through us. Do not fear that we shall go into nothingness: That is neither religion or philosophy, nor is it practical wisdom. Rather we shall find that Basic Principle which never fails us, which never disappoints us. Right here is the origin of our prayers, meditations, sermons, temples, churches—they are all to remind us of That. But what avail, if we do not carry the thoughts upon which these are based? It is not by going through forms and rituals in a material sense that we shall find our exaltation; it is tuning our hearts with the Great Heart, by making our mind and mouth one, our inner and our outer life in absolute accord. Only thus shall we find the full measure of divine attainment, the true gauge of spiritual values.

The deeper we go into science, the more certain it becomes that all the realities of Nature are in the regions of the invisible, so that the saying is literally, and not merely figuratively, true, that the things which are seen are temporal, and it is only the things which are not seen that are eternal.

—*Duke of Argyll.*

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Where life is free, in the third heaven of heavens, where the worlds are radiant; there make me immortal!

Where the place of the bright sun is, where there is freedom and delight; there make me immortal!

—*Rig-Veda.*

The sun of him who knoweth Thee not goeth down, O Amon! But as for him who knoweth Thee, he doth shine. . . . Whoso putteth Thee in his heart, O Amon, lo, his sun doth dawn!

—*Inscription from an Egyptian potsherd.*

Where shall I find Him, O my soul,
Who yet is everywhere?
Oh, not in circling depth or height,
But in the conscious breast;
Present to faith, though veiled from sight,
There doth His Spirit rest.

—*Joseph Conder.*

A godly life is the steadfast working out of inward freeness from self; to become thus God-like is the bringing back of a man's first nature.

—*Theologia Germanica.*

We should consider that God gave the sovereign part of the human soul to be the divinity of each one, being that part which, inasmuch as we are a plant not of an earthly but of a heavenly growth, raises us from earth to our kindred who are in heaven.

—*Plato.*

It is the Light of lights and is said to be beyond darkness. It is knowledge, the One to be known, and the goal of knowledge, dwelling in the hearts of all.

—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

UNUTTERABLE TRUTH

From the Enneads of Plotinus

Now that which transcends all things, even the most august Divine Mind, cannot be regarded as one of them; nor can we give It a name or predicate aught of It.

We speak indeed about It, but Itself we do not express; nor have we knowledge or intellection of It. But though it escapes our knowledge, It does not entirely escape us; for we can say what It is not, if not what It is.

We are like men inspired and possessed, who know only that they have in themselves something greater than themselves, they know not what. So it is with our relation to the Absolute.

When we use pure intelligence, we recognize that It is the Mind within the mind, the Source of being and of all things of the same order with Itself; but we see too that the One is not identified with any of them, but is greater than all we call being, greater and better than reason and intelligence and sense, though it is That which gives them whatsoever reality they have.

And we may think that the One is present when He illumines the house of him who calls upon Him; for there would be no light without His presence. The soul is dark that does not behold Him; but when illumined by Him, it has what it desired.

And this is the true end and aim of the soul, to apprehend that Light, and to behold It by that Light Itself, which is no other than the light by which It sees; even as we can only see the sun by the light of the sun.

How then can this come to us?

Let all else go!

A DREAM OF WILD BEES*

By Olive Schreiner

A mother sat alone at an open window. Through it came the voices of the children as they played under the acacia-trees, and the breath of the hot afternoon air. In and out of the room flew the bees, the wild bees, with their legs yellow with pollen, going to and from the acacia-trees, droning all the while. She sat on a low chair before the table, and darned. She took her work from the great basket that stood before her on the table; some lay on her knee and half covered the book that rested there. She watched the needle go in and out; and the dreary hum of the bees and the noise of the children's voices became a confused murmur in her ears, as she worked slowly and more slowly.

Then the bees, the long-legged, wasp-like fellows who make no honey, flew closer and closer to her head, droning. Then she grew more and more drowsy, and she laid her hand, with the stocking over it, on the edge of the table, and leaned her head upon it. And the voices of the children outside grew more and more dreamy, came now far, now near; then she did not hear them, but she felt under her heart where the ninth child lay. Bent forward and sleeping there, with the bees flying about her head, she had a weird brain-picture; she thought the bees lengthened and lengthened themselves out and became human creatures, and moved round and round her. Then one came to her softly, saying, "Let me lay my hand upon thy side where the child sleeps. If I shall touch him he shall be as I."

She asked, "Who are you?"

And he said, "I am Health. Whom I touch will have always the red blood dancing in his veins; he will not know

*From "Dreams."

weariness nor pain; life will be a long laugh to him."

"No," said another, "let me touch; for I am Wealth. If I touch him material care shall not feed on him. He shall live on the blood and sinews of his fellow-men, if he will; and what his eye lusts for, his hand will have. He shall not know 'I want.' " And the child lay still like lead.

And another said, "Let me touch him: I am Fame. The man I touch I lead to a high hill where all men may see him. When he dies he is not forgotten, his name rings down the centuries, each echoes it on to his fellows. Think—not to be forgotten through the ages!"

And the mother lay breathing steadily, but in the brain-picture they pressed closer to her.

"Let me touch the child," said one, "for I am Love. If I touch him he shall not walk through life alone. In the greatest dark, when he puts out his hand he shall find another hand by it. When the world is against him, another shall say, '*You and I.*' " And the child trembled.

But another pressed close and said, "Let me touch; for I am Talent. I can do all things—that have been done before. I touch the soldier, the statesman, the thinker, and the politician who succeed; and the writer who is never before his time, and never behind it. If I touch the child he shall not weep for failure."

About the mother's head the bees were flying, touching her with their long tapering limbs; and, in her brain-picture, out of the shadow of the room came one with sallow face, deep-lined, the cheeks drawn into hollows, and a mouth smiling quiveringly. He stretched out his hand. And the mother drew back, and cried, "Who are you?" He answered nothing; and she looked up between his eyelids. And she said, "What can you give the child—health?" And he said, "The man I touch, there wakes up in his blood a burn-

ing fever, that shall lick his blood as fire. The fever that I will give him shall be cured when his life is cured."

"You give wealth?"

He shook his head. "The man whom I touch, when he bends to pick up gold, he sees suddenly a light over his head in the sky; while he looks up to see it, the gold slips from between his fingers, or sometimes another passing takes it from him."

"Fame?"

He answered, "Likely not. For the man I touch there is a path traced out in the sand by a finger which no man sees. That he must follow. Sometimes it leads almost to the top, and then turns down suddenly into the valley. He must follow it, though none else sees the tracing."

"Love?"

He said, "He shall hunger for it—but he shall not find it. When he stretches out his arms to it, and would lay his heart against a thing he loves, then, far off along the horizon he shall see a light play. He must go toward it. The thing he loves will not journey with him; he must travel alone. When he presses somewhat to his burning heart, crying 'Mine, mine, my own!' he shall hear a voice—'Renounce! renounce! this is not thine!' "

"He shall succeed?"

He said, "He shall fail. When he runs with others they shall reach the goal before him. For strange voices shall call to him and strange lights shall beckon him, and he must wait and listen. And this shall be the strangest; far off across the burning sands where, to other men, there is only the desert's waste, he shall see a blue sea! On that sea the sun shines always, and the water is blue as burning amethyst, and the foam is white on the shore. A great land rises from it, and he shall see upon the mountain-tops burning gold."

The mother said, "He shall reach it?"

And he smiled curiously.

She said, "It is real?"

And he said, "What *is* real?"

And she looked up between his half-closed eyelids, and said, "Touch."

And he leaned forward and laid his hand upon the sleeper, and whispered to it, smiling; and this only she heard—"*This shall be thy reward—that the Ideal shall be real to thee.*"

And the child trembled; but the mother slept on heavily and her brain-picture vanished. But deep within her the antenatal thing that lay here had a dream. In those eyes that had never seen the day, in that half-shaped brain was a sensation of light! Light—that it had never seen. Light—that perhaps it never should see. Light—that existed somewhere!

And already it had its reward: the Ideal was real to it.

THE TREASURE OF TREASURES

By Eliot White

(Former Assistant Pastor of Grace Church, New York)

"If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned."

—*The Song of Solomon*, 8:7.

When the sculptor, Benvenuto Cellini, was completing the pouring of bronze for his great statue of Perseus, he narrates in his Autobiography the desperate struggle which he had to wage with the metal.

The mold was not yet perfectly filled with the molten mass when the fire beneath the "flux" began to die down. Horror siezed him! If the metal did not penetrate every smallest curve and crevice of the artist's pattern, the whole statue would be ruined, and the toil of long days be lost.

So, he tells in his breathless account, he and his workmen began tearing to pieces the building in which the casting was being wrought. Planks, joists, timbers, and every fragment of its furnishings that would burn, they hurled into the precious conflagration. These formerly possessed value in themselves, but none which could now compare with their worth in this crisis as food for the hotter flame.

The battle was won by narrowest margin. The bronze was melted to the last glowing drop, and obediently ran into the most delicate detail of the great mold. The sculptor and his helpers danced with joy although amid the dismantled ruins of their factory. They had literally given "all the substance of their house" for the beauty and love of a masterpiece of art, and knew that the sacrifice of all lesser things was a thousandfold worth the cost.

When today the visitor to the city of Florence, centuries later, admires the strength, grace, and superb craftsmanship of this same statue, where it stands in the beautiful Piazza dei Signori for the ages to enjoy, he appreciates the more deeply each finished element of the figure for knowing the unstinted expenditure of effort, anxiety, and devotion which is fused into the very fibre of the metal itself.

The statue of Perseus may furnish a not unworthy symbol of the imperious demand upon the human spirit which the Song of Solomon declares the purest love must forever make. "If a man would give all the substance of his house" in any effort to purchase it, "it would utterly be contemned." It can never be won by barter or compromise. It makes every material possession—more—even all mental gifts—brilliance, skill, erudition, authority, and their like—unworthy to be weighed in the same balance with it.

And when some crisis of experience endangers the vindication of love—the complete melting of that supremely

precious living "bronze" into every fold of the brain and every most delicate gravure of the heart and soul—he who would then withhold the "substance of his house" or any part of his possessions and endowments, to feed the sacred fire of loyalty and rapture, and thereby complete the unseen "founding," cannot expect to join the glorious company of the world's spiritual artisans.

Often the love for which the uttermost giving is asked has manifested itself under the aspect of the passion for country and race, and uncounted are the sacrifices which men and women have made for its sake. Every war in history has doubtless seemed to those who gave their lives in it, under any national banner, to be a righteous cause; they heroically cast in all their substance to aid it, and would indeed utterly have contemned those who refused the "last full measure of devotion."

Nevertheless, the conception of a yet more truly righteous cause is now dawning upon the minds of men in all nations —that of a World Brotherhood, taking up into its broader worth all that was good in national patriotism, but adding the thrilling and supreme revelation of a *Love of Men,* "of one blood on the face of the whole earth." For this the most far-seeing in every land are already prepared to make the complete sacrifice. They have highly vowed to give all the substance of their lives to advance this love which shall some day bathe the whole earth in warless fellowship and tender devotion—all for one and one for all.

This beautiful truth is also being more and more convincingly revealed, that every friendship and love-bond between parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives and all the other enamored, all comrades and loyal associates in religion, art, invention, science, healing, and intrepid pioneering in every difficult and perilous ad-

venture for the common good—that every individual one of such affectionate unions is helping to bring appreciably nearer the day of victory of the Love Universal.

Let us meditate this a moment longer to let its all but incredible reality sink deep into our consciousness—that there is absolutely not a single warm clasp of hands between comrades anywhere in lands or times, not a tender kiss between children, lovers, or the aged, faithful to each other through generations, not a frank and radiant smile of fellowship exchanged in city throngs between "strangers" who yet know themselves thrillingly merged into one soul because of that swift and venturous compact—not one of these vital interfusings of personalities, no matter how evanescent it may seem, that fails to contribute its effective share to the attainment of the flawless Love Feast of all the world.

Far beyond even the beauty and worth of such statues of bronze as the Renaissance craftsman melted out of the sacrifice of the substance of his house, will be the manifestation of the Love of the One God and Father of mankind, wrought out through the love of all for Him and for one another, in intenser emotion and delight than any but a few as yet experience.

While such giving and such feeling are even now just crossing the threshold of the future's golden portals, let us be among those who, nobly impatient of further delays in the fulfilment of Love's daring prophecy, even now exultantly give all the substance of soul, mind, and body for it, and utterly contemn ourselves when we falter and compromise in so holy and glorious a Quest!

There is no duty we so much under-rate as the duty of being happy. The man who forgets to be thankful has fallen asleep in life. —*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

FROM A CARMELITE CLOISTER

Letters from Sainte Thérèse of the Child Jesus

(Written to her sister Céline between the years 1888 and 1894, and here given in part.)

Do not let your weakness make you unhappy. When, in the morning, we feel no courage or strength for the practice of virtue, it is really a grace; it is the time to "lay the axe to the root of the tree," relying upon Jesus alone. If we fall, an act of love will set all right. . . . Love can do all things. The most impossible tasks seem to it easy and sweet. You know well that our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, nor even at their difficulty as at the love with which we do them. What, then, have we to fear?

. . . . . .

The other day I came across this striking passage: "To be resigned and to be united to the will of God are not the same; there is the same difference between them as that which exists between union and unity; in union there are still two, in unity there is but one." Yes, let us be one with God even in this life; and for this we should be more than resigned, we should embrace the Cross with joy.

. . . . . .

Do not think we can find love without suffering, for our nature remains and must be taken into account; but it puts great treasures within our reach. . . . We should like to suffer generously and nobly; we should like never to fall. What an illusion! What does it matter to me if I fall at every moment! In that way I realize my weakness and I gain thereby. My God, Thou seest how little I am good for, when Thou dost carry me in Thy arms; and if Thou leavest me alone, well, it is because it pleases thee to see me lie

on the ground. Then why should I be troubled?

If you are willing to bear in peace the trial of not being pleased with yourself, you will be offering the Divine Master a home in your heart. It is true that you will suffer, because you will be like a stranger to your own house; but do not be afraid—the poorer you are, the more Jesus will love you. I know that He is better pleased to see you stumbling in the night upon a stony road, than walking in the full light of day upon a path carpeted with flowers, because these flowers might hinder your advance.

. . . . . .

It seems to me that God has no need of years to perfect his labor of love in a soul. One ray from His Heart can in an instant make His flower blossom forth, never to fade. . . . We are His chosen lilies. He dwells as a King in our midst.—He lets us share the honors of His Royalty—His Divine Blood bedews our petals—and His Thorns as they wound us spread abroad the perfume of our love.

. . . . . .

"Make haste to come down, for this day I must abide in thy house." Jesus bids us come down. Where, then, must we go? The Jews asked Him: "Master, where dwellest Thou?" And He answered: "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His Head." If we are to be the dwelling-place of Jesus, we must come down even to this—we must be so poor that we have not where to lay our heads.

This grace of light has been given to me during my retreat. Our Lord desires that we should receive Him into our hearts, and no doubt they are empty of creatures. Alas! mine is not empty of self; that is why He bids me come down. And I shall come down even to the very ground, that Jesus may find within my heart a resting-place for His

Divine Head, and may feel that there at least He is loved and understood.

. . . . . .

You tell me that my letters do good to you. I am indeed glad, but I assure you that I am under no misapprehension: "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it." The greatest eloquence cannot call forth a single act of love without that grace which touches the heart.

Think of a beautiful peach with its delicate tint of rose, with its flavor so sweet that no human skill could invent such nectar. Tell me, Céline, is it for the peach's own sake that God created that color so fair to the eye, that velvety covering so soft to the touch? Is it for itself that He made it so sweet? Nay, it is for us; the only thing that is all its own and is essential to its being, is the stone: it possesses nothing beyond.

Thus also it pleases Jesus to lavish His gifts on certain souls in order to draw yet others to Himself; in His Mercy He humbles them inwardly, and gently compels them to recognize their nothingness and His Almighty Power. . . . Dear little sister, sweet echo of my soul, Thérèse is far from the heights of fervor at this moment; but I am in this state of spiritual dryness, unable to pray, or to practise virtue, I look for little opportunities, for the smallest trifles, to please my Jesus: a smile or a kind word, for instance, when I would wish to be silent, or to show that I am bored. If no such occasion offer, I try at least to say over and over again that I love Him. This is not hard, and it keeps alive the fire in my heart. Even should the fire of love seem dead, I would still throw my tiny straws on the ashes, and I am confident it would light up again.

. . . . . .

Dearest sister, I hardly know what I write; I let my pen follow the dictates of my heart. You tell me that you feel your weakness, but that is a grace. It is our Lord who sows the seeds of distrust of self in your soul. Do not be afraid! If you do not fail to give Him pleasure in small things, He will be obliged to help you in great ones.

The Apostles labored long without Him; they toiled a whole night and caught no fish. Their labors were not inacceptable to Him, but He wished to prove that He is the Giver of all things. So an act of humility was asked of the Apostles, and our loving Lord called to them: "Children, have you anything to eat?" St. Peter, avowing his helplessness, cried out: "Lord, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing." It is enough; the Heart of Jesus is touched. . . . Had the Apostle caught some small fish, perhaps our Divine Master would not have worked a miracle; but he had caught *nothing,* and so, through the power and goodness of God, his nets were soon filled with great fishes—such is our Lord's way. He gives as God—with divine largesse—but He insists on humility of heart.

. . . . . .

This is perhaps the last time that I need to have recourse to writing in order to talk to you, my dear little sister. God in His goodness has granted my dearest wish. Come, and we will suffer together. . . . Then Jesus will take one of us, and the others will remain in exile yet a little longer. Now, listen well to what I am going to say: God will never, never separate us; and if I die before you, do not think that I shall be far away—never shall we have been more closely united. You must not be grieved at my childish prophecy. I am not ill, I have an iron constitution; but the Lord can break iron as if it were clay*. . . .

*She died three years later.

I am so glad that you do not feel any particular attraction at the thought of entering the Carmel. This is really a mark of our Lord's favor, and shows that He looks for a gift from your hands. He knows that it is so much sweeter to give than to receive. What happiness to suffer for Him who loves us even unto folly, and to pass for fools in the eyes of the world! We judge others by ourselves, and, as the world will not hearken to reason, it calls us unreasonable too. . . .

We are neither idlers nor spendthrifts. Our Divine Master has taken our defense upon Himself. Remember the scene in the house of Lazarus: Martha was serving, while Mary had no thought of food, but only of how she could please her Beloved. And "she broke her alabaster box, and poured out upon her Saviour's Head the precious spikenard, and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment."

The Apostles murmured against Magdalen. This still happens, for so do men murmur against us. Even some fervent Catholics who think our ways are exaggerated, and that—with Martha—we ought to wait upon Jesus, instead of pouring out on Him the odorous ointment of our lives. Yet what does it matter if these ointment-jars—our lives—be broken, since our Lord is consoled, and the world in spite of itself is forced to inhale the perfumes they give forth? It has much need of these perfumes to purify the unwholesome air it breathes.

For a while only, good-bye, dearest sister. Your barque is near to port. The breezes filling its sails are the zephyrs of Love—breezes that speed more swiftly than the lightning-flash. Good-bye! in a few days we shall be together within these Carmel walls.

It is never too late to be what you might have been.

—*George Eliot.*

THE RELIGION OF THE SPIRIT

By Walter Lippmann

(An extract from his work, "A Preface to Morals"; published by The MacMillan Company, New York.)

Those who believe that their salvation lies in obedience to, and communion with, the King of Creation can know how wholehearted their faith is by the confidence of their own hearts. If they are at peace, they need inquire no further. There are, however, those who do not find a principle of order in the belief that they are related to a supernatural power. They cannot be argued into the ancient belief, for it has been dissolved by the circumstances of their lives. They are deeply perplexed. They have learned that the absence of belief is vacancy; they know, from disillusionment and anxiety, that there is no freedom in mere freedom. They must find, then, some other principle which will give coherence and direction to their lives. . . .

Since they are unable to find a principle of order in the authority of a will outside themselves, there is no place they can find it except in an ideal of the human personality. But they do not have to invent such an ideal out of hand. The ideal way of life for men who must make their own terms with experience and find their own happiness has been stated again and again. It is that only the regenerate, the disinterested, the mature, can make use of freedom. This is the central insight of the teachers of wisdom. We can see now, I think, that it is also the mark at which the modern study of human nature points. We can see, too, that it is the pattern of successful conduct in the most advanced phases of the development of modern civilization. The ideal, then, is an old one, but its confirmation and its practical pertinence are new. The world is able at last to take seriously what its

greatest teachers have said. And since all things need a name, if they are to be talked about, devotion to this ideal may properly be called by the name which these greatest teachers gave it; it may be called the religion of the spirit. At the heart of it is the knowledge that the goal of human effort is to be able, in the words I have so often quoted from Confucius, to follow what the heart desires without transgressing what is right.

In an age when custom is dissolved and authority is broken, the religion of the spirit is not merely a possible way of life. In principle it is the only way which transcends the difficulties. It alone is perfectly neutral about the constitution of the universe, in that it has no expectation that the universe will justify naive desire. Therefore, the progress of science cannot upset it. Its indifference to what the facts may be is indeed the very spirit of scientific inquiry. A religion which rests upon particular conclusions in astronomy, biology, and history may be fatally injured by the discovery of new truths. But the religion of the spirit does not depend upon creeds and cosmologies; it has no vested interest in any particular truth. It is concerned not with the organization of matter, but with the quality of human desire.

It alone can endure the variety and complexity of things, for the religion of the spirit has no thesis to defend. It seeks excellence wherever it may appear, and finds it in anything which is inwardly understood; its motive is not acquisition but sympathy. Whatever is completely understood with sympathy for its own logic and purposes ceases to be external and stubborn and is wholly tamed. To understand is not only to pardon, but in the end to love. There is no itch in the religion of the spirit to make men good by bearing down upon them with righteousness, and making them conform to a pattern. Its social principle is to live and let live. It has

the only tolerable code of manners for a society in which men and women have become freely-moving individuals, no longer held in the grooves of custom by their ancestral ways. It is the only disposition of the soul which meets the moral difficulties of an anarchical age, for its principle is to civilize the passions, not by regulating them imperiously, but by transforming them with a mature understanding of their place in an adult environment. It is the only possible hygiene of the soul for men whose selves have become disjointed by the loss of their central certainties, because it counsels them to draw the sting of possessiveness out of their passions, and thus by removing anxiety to render them harmonious and serene.

The philosophy of the spirit is an almost exact reversal of the worldling's philosophy. The ordinary man believes that he will be blessed if he is virtuous, and therefore virtue seems to him a price he pays now for a blessedness he will some day enjoy. While he is waiting for his reward, therefore, virtue seems to him drab, arbitrary, and meaningless. For the reward is deferred, and there is really no instant proof that virtue really leads to the happiness he has been promised. Because the reward is deferred, it too becomes vague and dubious, for that which we never experience, we cannot truly understand. In the realm of the spirit, blessedness is not deferred; there is no future which is more auspicious than the present; there are no compensations later for evils now. Evil is to be overcome now and happiness is to be achieved now, for the kingdom of God is within you. The life of the spirit is not a commercial transaction in which the profit has to be anticipated; it is a kind of experience which is inherently profitable.

And so the mature man would take the world as it comes, and within himself remain quite unperturbed. When he

acted, he would know that he was only testing an hypothesis, and if he failed, he would know that he had made a mistake. He would be quite prepared for the discovery that he might make mistakes, for his intelligence would be disentangled from his hopes. The failure of his experiment could not, therefore, involve the failure of his life. For the aspect of life which implicated his soul would be his understanding of life, and, to the understanding, defeat is no less interesting than victory. It would be no effort, therefore, for him to be tolerant, and no annoyance to be skeptical. He would face pain with fortitude, for he would have put it away from the inner chambers of his soul. Fear would not haunt him, for he would be without compulsion to seize anything, and without anxiety as to its fate. He would be strong, not with the strength of hard resolves, but because he was free of that tension which vain expectations beget.

Would his life be uninteresting because he was disinterested? He would have the whole universe, rather than the prison of his own hopes and fears, for his habitation, and in imagination all possible forms of being. How could that be dull unless he brought the dullness with him? He might dwell with all beauty and all knowledge, and they are inexhaustible. Would he, then, dream idle dreams? Only if he chose to. For he might go quite simply about the business of the world, a good deal more effectively perhaps than the worldling, in that he did not place an absolute value upon it, and deceive himself. Would he be hopeful? Not if to be hopeful was to expect the world to submit rather soon to his vanity. Would he be hopeless? Hope is an expectation of favors to come, and he would take his delights here and now. Since nothing gnawed at his vitals, neither doubt nor ambition, nor frustration, nor fear, he would move easily through life. And so whether he saw the thing as comedy, or high

tragedy, or plain farce, he would affirm that it is what it is, and that the wise man can enjoy it.

THIS LITTLE BODY HOLDETH ALL

From the Teachings of Gautama Buddha

Once the Exalted One was dwelling near Savatthi, in Jeta Grove, in the Park of Anathapindika, the Feeder of the Poor.

Now at that time, one Rohitassa, who was son to a deva, when the night was far spent lit up the whole circuit of Jeta Grove with a wondrous radiance, and came to the Exalted One and, greeting him, stood at one side.

So standing, Rohitassa, son to a deva, thus spoke: "Is there, O Lord, anywhere, whither going one can reach to where there is no birth, no ageing, no decaying, no falling away to rise up again elsewhere in rebirth? Can one, O Lord, by going thither know the end or see the end or reach the end of the world?"

"No, friend! I declare that there is nowhere whither going one would find no birth, no ageing, no decay, no falling away to rise up elsewhere in rebirth. By going I declare one cannot know the end, see the end, reach the end of the world."

"Wonderful, O Lord! A marvel, O Lord! How well said is this saying that is uttered by the Exalted One! In former days, Lord, I was a sage called Rohitassa. Son of Bhoja I was. I had the magic power of flying through the air. Such speed I had—it was even as when a mighty archer, well trained and skilled in archery, with a light arrow and slight effort, speeds a shaft far beyond the limits of the shadow cast by a palm-tree. So mighty was the stride of my feet that it was even as the stretch between the Eastern and the Western Oceans. To me, Lord, possessed of such speed and

of such a mighty stride, there came this longing: 'By going I will reach the end of the world.'

And so, Lord, even as I was, unfed by food or drink, without resting or even performing nature's needs, without waiting to dispel my weariness by sleep—though in those days man's span of life was a hundred years—yet a hundred years I journeyed on. But I never reached it. I never came to the end. I died before I reached world's end!

Wondrous it is, O Lord, that hath been so well spoken by the Exalted One, to wit: 'Thou canst not by going reach that place wherein there are no birth, no ageing, no decaying, no falling away, no rising up elsewhere in rebirth. Thou canst not by going come to such a place!' "

"Even so. Nevertheless, my friend, I do not say that without reaching the world's end an end of woe cannot be made (for you can end it here and now). For, my friend, in this very body, six feet in length, with its sense-impressions and its thoughts and ideas, I do declare to you are the world, and the origin of the world, and the ceasing of the world, and likewise the Way that leadeth to the ceasing thereof."

(So saying, the Master summed up what he had said in these verses:)

Not to be reached by going is world's end.
Yet is there no release for man from woe,
Unless ye reach world's end. Yea, verily
He that is wise and lives the holy life,
He knows the world. He goeth to world's end.
Calmed is he, for he knows. He hankereth
Neither for this world nor for any world.

Few among men are they who reach the farther shore; the rest, a mighty multitude, run hither and thither along the bank. —*Dhammapada.*

REPORT

On October 16th, at the regular Thursday dinner at the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Dr. James H. Cousins was the honored guest. A large number of friends attended on this occasion. There was a special musical program, after which Dr. Cousins in his own charming manner spoke on the aspirations of India. The evening closed with a short address by Swami Paramananda who presided over the meeting. On the following Sunday, Dr. Cousins again spoke at the Centre at the afternoon Service, relating many of his personal and sacred experiences while traveling in India. It was especially gratifying to the listeners to get intimate glimpses of Indian life, custom and habit from one who has for many years devoted himself to educational work among the people of India.

On the evening of October 23d, the regular Hindu dinner was planned especially in honor of Srimati Charushila Devi by the friends of the Centre, prior to her departure for India. After the usual musical program she was presented with a fitting farewell address illuminated on parchment, expressing the deep and profound sentiments of the friends and members of the Vedanta Centre for her faithful and devoted services to the cause of Truth for the past two years and a half. Her spontaneous reply was impressive and heartfelt. Mr. Kiran Chandra Roy paid a very tender tribute to Charushila Devi, relating some of his early boyhood recollections of her in India. Mr. Daniel Oulton spoke feelingly and with deep appreciation of his gratitude to the teaching and to Swami Paramananda. He concluded his speech by saying what a great vacancy will be left by the departure of Charushila Devi. Miss Katherine F. Sherwood, who has just returned from India expressed her deep satisfaction in being once more back at the Centre.

Srimati Gayatri Devi has returned from Europe after an interesting trip through Germany, France, Switzerland and Italy. Now she is conducting the Services and Classes at the Vedanta Centre of Boston.

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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES." Rig-Veda

VEDANTA MONTHLY

Message of the East

DECEMBER, 1930

Love Will Conquer

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"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*
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THOU ART MY GOD

By Swami Paramananda

(From the Swami's book of poems, "My Creed.")

LOVE! Thou art my God,
My Goddess,
My Master and my Mistress,
My Consort,
My Playmate,
My Comrade and Companion—
All these and more art Thou.
Sweet ecstasy of life I find in Thee.
With Thee I am;
Without Thee I am nothing.
Now Thou hast come to me I feel secure,
All cares are gone,
My faith and courage
Have blossomed like twin flowers,
My heart is like a green garden
Fragrant after a shower of dewdrops at dawn.
Love! stay with me, stay on;
Without Thee life is a desolation.
Yet will I not hold Thee, nor urge Thy staying.
Thou art delicate, most tender;
I will not press,
But only will I invoke, worship, and pray at
Thy shrine.

LOVE WILL CONQUER

By Swami Paramananda

There are moments in our life when we see and feel with a certain distinctness. The man of spiritual vision describes these moments as revelation, but this revelation comes to all mortals and forms the real strength of their existence. Approaching the great theme of love, we must as much as possible try to feel that it is not just an abstract principle. Of course we do realize this, but only to the extent that love is related to our mortal sphere. Spiritual love, however, is a very definite and a very potent reality.

"The glory of life is to love, not to be loved; to give, not to get; to serve, not to be served."

Here is a saying from a Christian source, yet how like it is to the teaching of the Bhagavad-Gita, which Sri Krishna gave ages ago: "To work alone thou hast the right, but never to the fruits thereof"—love for love's sake; work for work's sake, for the sake of itself. Naturally we must make our own interpretation, but these words may help to make clear to us what this Western mystic means.

Once a king was standing at the foot of the Himalayas with his queen. It was King Yudhisthira, one of the greatest of India's heroes, great not merely in the sense that he was a powerful ruler, but that he was an exalted spiritual being as well. And the queen was reproaching him for his noble qualities, as people often reproach others for their goodness, because through that very goodness, they are, so they think, not getting the best for themselves in this world of life.

"Why is it you are forever thinking of God and praising Him?" she asked, "What has He ever given you? Nothing but miseries all your days! Yet see how devoted you are—always loving and giving!"

For answer, the king pointed to the Himalayas.

"Look," he said, "at those mountains—magnificent, beautiful! How we love them! Yet we do not ask anything from them. There is nothing to ask, the beauty itself is sufficing. And just in that way do I love God."

Perhaps this incident may give a little idea of the fullness of life—that perpetual fullness—possessing which a man has no time to calculate or measure how much he has given or what amount he has received.

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."

We have heard a great deal concerning love from the lips of the preachers, but love is not anything we can merely speculate about, nor can it be conveyed by word of mouth; it is a fact; it is a force; it transforms and redeems. Men who are afraid of giving, afraid of serving, afraid of being their natural self, it lifts them out of that sphere altogether. That is the reason why the wise say God is love. Also love is the only approach to God. By "only approach" I mean that though there are many methods of reasoning, it is only after we have exhausted them all that we become a part of that great Blessedness. Among the people of the earth there is no difference of opinion that, no matter how we reach it, whether through philosophy, logic, spiritual idealism or through work, love, moving through all forms of life, is the most potent power in the universe. It is one thing, however, to reason about it, and quite another to partake of it. The only one through whom we may taste the joy of God is the man who has become transformed by means of love.

"Man loves and man hates, but He, the all-loving, ever loves and never hates."

What does this mean? How is it possible for God to be

all-loving? We cannot understand it. With us, when a man seeks to become imbued with this spirit and forgive his enemies, we call him a fool. Do not think I am exaggerating; we do. Suppose you find your child given to extreme idealism, not wanting to embrace the ways of the world, not desiring to calculate, but rather to follow the path of Christ, Buddha, St. Francis or some of the other great ones, at once you are anxious—very anxious—about his welfare. How then am I to understand that you are a Christian? You call yourself one, but if you actually believed in the teachings, you would support, sustain, and encourage him, and wait for the results. In view of all this, are you prepared to grasp the significance in the command of the mystic when he tells us to love without expecting to be loved; to give without asking—like a beggar—for a return? Yet what return would suffice us? In the great Scriptures, we read of how an angel came to a saint.

"What would you have—" he asked, "the kingdom of the earth? Will you have power? Do you want to rule over men?" And the saint replied:

"No, I want none of these things."

"Surely," exclaimed the angel, "there must be something that you desire."

"Yes," said the saint, "there is: that I may love God with my whole being."

From our point of view this seems like a tremendous loss of opportunity. Our mind is limited by ambition to the sphere of gain and loss. As soon, however, as we have crossed the threshold out of this world of bargaining and bartering, and have really experienced what spirituality holds for us, we enter into a realm of beauty, and it is from that province I am speaking. Once we have gained our access there, we realize that love does govern everything.

It is the greatest healing power that there is. In our heart of hearts we all know this; we experience it every day. It may be given to us sometime to quiet one who is afflicted with the disease of anger, unrest or unhappiness, or to pacify a man and a woman who are almost on the point of murdering each other. And, in such a crisis, when no reasoning or persuasion can bring about peace, a little child, perhaps, comes and lays his hand upon one of those who have lost themselves—lost their bearing and dignity as human beings—and at once we witness the working of a miracle. Almost instantly that angry person forgets his anger—he is quenched by a tender touch. And what is this but the expression of love?

Love is the most holy thing there is in life. Devout people everywhere, no matter what they call themselves—Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan, or anything else—seek to put it into practice; and to the extent that they succeed, they become partakers of Divinity.

We hear people say, "I love God!" but these same people will exhibit hatred toward those whom they look upon as evil, who, they feel, are not deserving of their love and affection. There is no such thing as real love of God and hatred of anyone, just as there is no existence for the darkness when there is light. Darkness and light cannot co-exist. You may argue the matter; you may say that we feel love and again we feel hate. But we do not feel them at the same time, and only as we follow the way of love do we find the way of God, because God is love. All religions agree upon this.

"Language of the soul is spoken without tongue." Language of love is spoken without tongue. Love is a universal principle. We look at someone out of loving tenderness, and all the accumulation, all the ashes of misunderstanding

are swept away; they disappear like magic. Just one glance penetrates into the very depth of the soul. This also is a miracle. It reveals to us the practical province of life, and until we become interested in that, we waste our time and energy and life itself in great measure.

Love will conquer all your ills;
Love will heal your wounds. . . .
Love will give you faith and hope.
Love will bring you bliss. . . .

When I wrote these lines, I was not merely trying to find pretty words, I was striving to express an experience—a definite conviction. And this experience, this conviction you cannot question until you have tried to put the same force into your own life. Put it into your life. Try it for an hour and see whether or not it works the miracle that is promised. Try it for less than an hour, for a very short time, and even then it will bring to you the conclusive proof of your power of transcendence.

Many of the modern religious movements have laid tremendous emphasis on certain formulas for success. Success is not a question of formula. All the formulas in the world will not bring happiness to a heart that is not open to it. Some of you may have heard that the great Hindu scriptures, the Vedas, were not taught to those who were thought to be unworthy. They could not be taught to the unworthy. Even ordinary science cannot be taught to the man who has not intelligence or power of receptivity. The chemist has his formula, the scientist has his codes, but the only man who can read them is he who has the right spirit of understanding and initiative. Truth cannot be given to one who has closed the doors within his own soul. Such a one may possess many books and Bibles; he may have gathered, as many do, a wonderful library; but it is not through

libraries that we gain this greater knowledge.

Why is it that Christ and Christ-like spirits advocated the love of God? Let me try to give you the practical hypothesis. Man is always saying with big-sounding words: "Let us have universal brotherhood." And he proceeds to form societies and organizations; to raise funds and spread propaganda. But in spite of all this; brotherhood has not been attained. Why? Because it must be realized first within the heart. We cannot begin with it on the human plane. That is where we make a tremendous mistake. Rather we should strive to realize the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God—the Divine Parenthood—and inevitably it will follow that we shall be connected with the higher universe. When we have the revelation that love is not merely a word or an abstract idea, by that realization we become so completely a part of the living principle that we are no longer capable of hating, and brotherhood becomes a fact.

"Make your mind and mouth one, your inner and your outer life identical." This was the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna, and so true was it of him that when his disciples, wishing to test the reality of his renunciation of lust and gold, would touch him with a coin when he was asleep, his whole body would recoil. "That is superstition," you may say. Why is it superstition? An instrument which has been very wonderfully tuned is sensitive; it responds to the least touch, and breaks under rude handling. There are creepers growing in India which are so delicate that they cannot endure any rough contact. It is no exaggeration to say that it makes them fade away. I have seen it happen before my eyes. In same way, there are human flowers—human instruments—so beautiful, so divine, so in tune with the One Life, that they transcend the sphere of hatred. We read about such beings, but, unfortunately, we read with

distorted motion. We say of Christ that it was possible for Him to forgive His enemies, because it was predestined; of Lord Buddha, that he was able to maintain that calm spirit of absolute indifference when his enemies tried to molest him, and radiate only the light of love, because he was already endowed with that power. But in studying their lives we find that these great souls went through the same struggle that we are confronted with—endured the same conflict between light and darkness. They did not yield to the influence of darkness, however; and it is just this determination that every man and every woman must develop. That power we possess, and the innate recognition of greatness. We honor the man who exhibits love even toward his enemies. We say, "Here is a noble character." There is hardly a human being who does not appreciate and almost worship true nobility of spirit. Some times a man hates himself, because he is able to perceive what is lofty, and yet feels he is incapable of being other than he is, or thinks that he is. This is a fallacy. We are all capable of becoming that which we aspire to be. The same force that torments us through hatred can be turned in another direction without any great effort. The choice is ours. But, as I said at the beginning, these things we cannot explain with words. The greatest souls, the real teachers of men, are something other than mere preachers. In this relation, a little story comes to my mind:

We all know how there were among Christ's disciples those who denied Him, and how one not only abandoned Him but very definitely turned against Him. Now this also was true of the disciples of Lord Buddha. In his search for Truth, the Buddha was very austere, and certain ascetics, seeing his austerities, were drawn to him. "He must be very holy," they said, "he lives without food; he does not

sleep at all." Constantly thinking and dreaming of the great Goal which he sought, he paid little heed to his body. Then, one day there came to him the revelation that this body was also God-given, and delicate as the beautiful stringed instrument, the Indian *vina*. The *vina,* if a man abruptly tries to tune it, the strings snap and it remains dumb; but let a man tune it properly, and it will produce heavenly music. The Lord knew that this came to him as a warning, and the very next day, through a turn of Divine Providence, he was offered some food. Gladly he accepted, and it was this acceptance which made his disciples turn against him. They left him alone; they went away. But after they had gone, he attained his great Illumination beneath the Tree, and, having attained it, as the result of his renunciation, there arose in him the longing to serve humanity, to bring solace and comfort to his fellow-men. Considering who should be the first to whom he would go, his thought turned to those who had deserted him. There was not in his mind any memory of resentment or anger; there was only the wish that he might transmit what he had received to others.

Now these men were like all people who live on the crust of dogma: they could not imagine that the path of God was open, vast, unlimited. So when they saw the Lord approach, they made up their minds that they would have nothing to do with him. One said, "When he comes I will not speak to him; I will be rude." Another said, "I will turn my back on him." But though they were full of determination to insult him, when they were actually in his presence, the man who said he was not going to speak to him, came and saluted him, and the one who said he was going to turn his back, brought some water and washed his feet, and all their resolutions of bitterness and enmity ut-

terly dissolved and disappeared. What dissolved them? The power of love; and that same power will melt away all our hardness and pain and harshness if we will only carry in our hearts the same all-loving spirit. You may say, "How can we do it? So often we meet people who are not loving or lovable, who deliberately cheat us and make us unhappy—how can we love them?" Yet if you return evil for evil, it helps nothing; you only make yourself unhealthy and most unhappy. Let us, therefore, try to see if we cannot find some practical approach to this divine Principle laid down by Christ, Buddha, and all those who are truly worthy to carry the message of Light and Truth.

You are, perhaps, determined that no matter what others may do to you, you are not going to sacrifice your Ideal. Now your resolution may be very firm, yet the hour of test will come; and when it comes what are you going to do? Perhaps it will come in the form of one to whom you cannot give your love, in whom you cannot see Divinity, in spite of all your desire to do so, because Divinity is not shining clearly through him. If you find yourself in such a helpless and difficult position, do not for a moment think that there is no alternative, that one you cannot love you must of necessity hate. Withdraw your mind from that person and turn it toward your Ideal, until you have gained your balance. In this way you will find that you cannot be defeated. Do not, however, be like the parrot, repeating something literally without knowing its practical application. Fortify yourself with wisdom and with intelligence; minimize the emotions that are destructive and that carry you off the path. By these means eventually you will find yourself triumphant.

We are at present overcome with the sleep of ignorance, the sleep of disbelief, which causes us to have a lethargic

attitude toward spiritual realities. But this vanishes when the real understanding comes to us, when revelation bursts upon us like the rising sun. People who live in that consciousness, we see the self-same light shining through them; their mission is for the whole; their love is for the whole, not for any one part. Let us think of that love, dream about it, and foster it as we would a tender plant. Let us not talk about it too much; people who love, they speak little. People who serve, they do not want to be recognized. "The glory of life is to love, not to be loved; to give, not to get; to serve, not to be served."

One thing more I must tell you before I bring this to a close. The Lord does not force anyone to do anything. He is free, absolutely free; and He gives that same freedom to His children. Often we complain: "Why did He not make us in another way, so that we would be different from what we are—more beautiful, more attractive, with stronger will and greater endowments?" Did He not endow us with intelligence? Did He not give us the faculty of thinking and feeling, and a heart through which we can love? The heart is a marvelous instrument. By expanding it, we make a living contact not only with those who are immediately connected with us, but with the cosmic universe, and we become imbued with an unending power. It is this that we find in the men we call heroes and spiritual prophets. They give up the little self in order to become partakers of that Immensity.

Do not be afraid to love, to give, and to serve. It is through these practical avenues that our life expands. Happiness is not something we can buy from the market-place, nor is peace of mind to be acquired by holding ourselves aloof from humanity. No. These are conditions born within our own soul out of pure understanding, pure feeling, and selfless love.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

O Lord! O Imperishable One! In whatever thousands of births I may wander, may my undying love be always in Thee. —*Vishnu Purana.*

Where any man seeketh himself, there anon he falleth from love. —*Thomas a Kempis.*

There is one supreme lesson—one thing that stands out from my life's experience; we all have to learn to love our fellow-creatures. Throughout my alloted span I have sought to break open those sealed boxes in which, so it seems to me, humanity is imprisoned—those boxes of hatred, suspicion and ignorance—in which the nations and the social groups are enclosed, and which are the cause of conflicts without end. I have tried—perhaps without success—but the effort, the struggle, must go on. That is my message to posterity.

—*Leonid Krassin, on his death-bed.*

Love must govern the earth which ambition wearies. . . . Love is that peaceful and productive flame, that warmth of heaven which enlivens and renews, which causes birth and blossoming, imparts color, grace and hope to life. Ambition is that sterile fire which burns beneath the ice, consumes without animating anything, hollows vast caverns, disturbs in secret, flashes forth in opening abysses, and leaves a century of desolation to a country amazed by this illumination of an hour. —*Etienne Pivert de Senancour.*

The God that ruleth the city is Love.

—*Attributed to Zeno, the Stoic.*

Love cannot lose the reward of its own lovingness; for the things that divide are earthly and perishable, but the things that unite are eternal and can await the processes of Eternity. —*L. Adams Beck.*

Love will conquer at the last. —*Tennyson.*

THE COMMANDMENT

By Richard Rolle. Early 14th Century. (Known as the Hermit of Hampole and called the father of English mysticism.)

The Commandment of God is that we love our Lord with all our heart, with all our soul; with all our thought.

With all our heart, that is with all our understanding, without erring. With all our soul, that is with all our will, without gainsaying. With all our thought, that is that we think on Him, without forgetting. In this manner is very love and true, that is the work of man's will. For love is a deliberate stirring of our thought towards God, so that it receive nothing that is against the love of Jesus Christ, and that thereby it be enduring in sweetness of devotion. . . .

And that thou mayest win to the sweetness of God's love, I set down here three degrees of love in which thou shouldst be ever waxing. The first degree is called Insuperable, the second Inseparable, the third Singular.

Thy love is Insuperable when nothing may overcome it; that is, neither weal nor woe, ease nor anguish, lust of the flesh nor pleasure of this world. But always it perseveres in good thoughts . . . so that nothing may quench that love.

Thy love is Inseparable when all thy thoughts and desires are gathered together and fixed wholly in Jesus Christ so that thou mayest at no time forget Him, but always think on Him. And hence it is called Inseparable, for it may not be parted from the thought of Jesus Christ.

Thy Love is Singular when all thy delight is in Jesus Christ and thou dost find joy and comfort in no other thing. . . .

For all earthly love passes and soon withers away; naught

that falleth thereto remains but the pain that it deserved. If thou art covetous after good, love Him, and thou shalt have all good. Desire Him truly and thou shalt want nothing. If thou dost like delights, love Him, for He gives to His lovers delights that may never perish. But all the delights of this world are faint and false, and fail when they are needed most: they begin in sweetness and their ending is more bitter than gall. . . .

If thou mayest not dare to sit alone, busy thyself stalwartly in His love and He shall so firmly set thee that all the solace of this world shall not remove thee, for thou wilt not desire thereof. When thou art by thyself be always, till sleep come, either in prayer or good meditation. And order thy praying and thy watching and thy fasting that it be in discretion, not overmuch nor overlittle. But remember always that of all things God most covets the love of man's heart. And therefore seek more to love Him than to do penance, for unskilful penance is worth little or naught. But love is always the best, whether thou dost much penance or little.

Strive with all thy might, that thou art so inwardly given to the love of Jesus Christ that, for ghostly joy in thy soul, nothing that men may do or say can make thee sorry; so that thy inward thought be fed only on the sweetness of Christ's love, and not on delight in earthly ease, nor on the praise of men when they begin to speak well of thee, nor on idle joy.

Trust in God that He will give to thee what thou prayest of Him skilfully. Skilful prayer is for a . . . man's soul to seek and ask, night and day, that it may love Him verily, feeling comfort and delight in Him, casting out worldly thoughts and evil business. And thou art secure if thou dost covet His love truly and perseveringly, so that no love

of the flesh, nor anger of the world, nor speech nor hatred of men draw thee again, and cast thee into the business of bodily things. Then thou shalt have His love and find and feel that it is more delectable in an hour than all the wealth that we may see here though we might live to Doomsday. And if thou dost fail and fall for temptations, or for anger or for overmuch love of thy friends, it is no wonder if He hold from thee the thing that thou desirest not truly. . . .

The shepherds that sought Him found Him lying in a crib between two beasts—as thou knowest. If thou seekest Him truly, it behooves thee to go in the way of poverty and not of riches. The star led the three kings into Bethlehem, where they found Christ swaddled in clouts simply, as a poor bairn. Thereby understand that whilst thou art in pride and vanity thou findest Him not.

How mayest thou for shame, who art but a servant, with many clothes and rich, follow thy Spouse and thy Lord, Who went in a kirtle; and thou dost trail as much behind thee as all that He had on? Therefore I advise thee to part with them, ere thou and He meet, that He reprove thee not for excess: for He wills that thou shouldst have that which thou hast need of, and no more. He said to His disciples that they should not have as many clothes as two might be sustained with, for to be burdened therewith is excessive concern, which He forbids.

The love of Jesus Christ is a full dear treasure, full delightful joy, and full secure for man to trust in. Hence He will not give it to fools that cannot hold it and keep it tenderly; but He gives it to those who neither for weal nor for woe will let it pass from them, but they would die ere they would wrath Jesus Christ.

And no wise man puts precious liquor in a stinking vessel, but in a clean. So Christ puts not His love in a heart

foul with sin. . . but in a heart that is fair and clean in virtues. Nevertheless a foul vessel may be made so clean that a very dear thing safely may be put therein. And Jesus Christ often cleanses many a man's soul and makes it able through His grace to receive the delectable sweetness of His love and to be His dwelling-place in holiness: and ever the cleaner it waxes, the more joy and solace of heaven Christ sets therein. Therefore at the first time that a man is turned to God he may not feel that sweet liquor till he has been well employed in God's service, and his heart is purged through prayers and penance and good thoughts in God. For he that is slow in God's service may not be burning in love, unless he put forth all his might and labor night and day to fulfil God's will.

And when that blessed love is in a man's heart, it will not suffer him to be idle, but always it stirs him to do some good that might be pleasing to God—as in praying or working profitable things, or in speaking of Christ's passion; and principally in thought, that the memory of Jesus Christ pass not from his mind. For if thou dost love Him truly thou wilt be glad in Him and in no other thing; and thou wilt think on Him, casting away all other thoughts. . . .

Wherefore that thou mayest love Him truly, understand that the love of Him is proved in three things: in thinking, in speaking, in working. Change thy thought from the world and cast it wholly on Him, and He shall nourish thee. Change thy mouth from unseemly and worldly speech and speak of Him, and He shall comfort thee. Change thy hands from the works of vanity and lift them in His name, and work only for His love, and He shall receive thee. Do thus, and then thou lovest truly and goest in the way of perfection. Delight so in Him that thy heart receive neither worldly joy nor worldly sorrow: and dread no anguish nor

suffering, nor mischief nor sickness that may befall bodily on thee or on any of thy friends, but take it all as God's will, and thank Him always for all He sends, so that thou mayest have rest and savour in His Love.

For if thy heart be led either with worldly dread or worldly solace, thou art very far from the sweetness of Christ's love. And look well that thou seem not one thing without and be another within, as do hypocrites. . . . If thou hast delight in the name of religion, see that thou hast more delight in the duty that falls to religion. Thine habit says that thou hast forsaken the world, that thou art given to God's service, that thou delightest not in earthly things: see then that it be in thy heart as it seems in men's sight; for nothing may make thee religious but virtues and cleanness of soul in charity. . . .

Cast away sloth and employ thyself manfully in goodness. Be gracious and meek to all men. Let nothing bring thee to ire or envy. Furnish thy soul fair and make therein a throne of love for God's Son, and make thy will covetous to receive Him as gladly as thou wouldst be at the coming of a thing that thou loved most of all things. Wash thy thoughts clean with love-tears and burning desire, that He find nothing foul in thee: for His joy is that thou be fair and lovesome in His eyes. The beauty of thy soul that He covets is that thou be chaste and meek, mild and patient, never loth to do His will, ever hating all wickedness. In all that thou dost, think always to come to the sight of His beauty and set all thine intent upon it that thou mayest come thereto at thine ending.

We need not hope that our work will be majestic if there is no majesty in ourselves.

—*Ruskin.*

WHENCE COMES BEAUTY?

By Faith Green

"Tell me the history of the necklace you are wearing; it looks old and interesting," you said.

But I did not know its history. It had come from China—that the beauty of its workmanship, and the symbolism of its design made clear, and it was very old. The years had softened the colors of the enamelled pendants and dulled the bright silver. The clear blue of the turquoise was fading into green, and the beads were a little flattened from long wear. But I did not know its history—whose treasure it had been, or the many hands through which it had passed. I had not even wondered.

What I had asked as I sat weaving the new strands among the old was—whence came the thought of beauty that lay behind the skill of its fashioning, beauty made visible in the blended tints, given form in its shape and design; and this is the little tale the necklace told to me.

An old man sat in the dim archway of his little shop. In his hand lay the thing he had fashioned, in his old eyes a dream.

A mist of rainbows.

A child playing in a garden, lifting his face to the light, Softly he touched the flowers, the cool petals against his finger-tips like music—or was it the scent of the blossoms that was like a song?—touch blending into fragrance, and fragrance growing out of color, and color into sound.

Surely the bird song in the garden when the red sun had sunk in a golden glory behind the willows, and the pale moon had not risen, surely the bird song then was only the silver glint of the little stream grown audible.

He had listened, leaning far out into the night. Soft black-

ness, dim greys—where did the colors of the sweet blossoms go in the night?

They were there, in the bird song—warmth of red and orange, clear high notes of blue, and low sweet tender murmurings of violet, green of young willow shoots, and palest primrose.

And the little night winds cool against his face.

A young man in the busy market place.

From the east and the west they come, from the far north and the sweet-scented land of the south. And some bring jewels, sapphires with stars at their hearts, and amethysts, amber for joy and corals from the sea, jade that is like a song to the touch.

The hour of noon.

A man from beyond the high Tibetan peaks, where turquoise are that are like the sky on summer mornings, and lapis, dark like the sea on a clear day after storm. From behind Chang La, and Ta-chien-lu he came, across the Niti and the Kashgar plains, beyond the slopes of sacred Kailas and south of Srinagar—and in the busy market place there was a hush.

> "Seek out the way.
>
> The peace that you shall find is that sacred peace that nothing can disturb, in which the soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoons.
>
> Listen to the song of life.
>
> Store in your heart the melody you hear. Life itself has speech, and its utterance is not a cry; it is a song.
>
> Seek out the way.
>
> Make profound obeisance of the soul to the dim star that burns within. Steadily, as you watch and worship, its light will grow stronger. Then you may know

you have found the beginning of the way. And when you have found the end, its light will suddenly become the infinite light."

The hum of the market place.

And was there a still garden within one, where light was, and color and beauty and the sound of wings, and stars dreamed above dim lotus pools.

A trinket for a woman's wear, or beauty wrought of the rainbows in one's soul.

An old man sat in the dark archway of his little shop. In his bent old fingers lay the thing he had fashioned, and in his eyes a dream.

SOME THOUGHTS ON LOVE

By Swami Vivekananda

(Commentaries by the Swami on certain of the Narada Bhakti Sutras. From "Inspired Talks.")

"Extreme love to God is Bhakti, and this love is the real immortality, getting which a man becomes perfectly satisfied, sorrows for no loss, and is never jealous; knowing which man becomes mad."

My Master used to say, "this world is a huge lunatic asylum where all men are mad, some after money, some after women, some after name or fame, and a few after God. I prefer to be mad after God. God is the philosopher's stone that turns us to gold in an instant; the form remains, but the nature is changed—the human form remains, but no more can we hurt or sin."

"Thinking of God, some weep, some sing, some laugh, some say wonderful things, but all speak of nothing but God."

Prophets preach, but the Incarnations like Jesus, Buddha, Ramakrishna, can *give* religion; one glance, one touch is enough. That is the power of the Holy Ghost, the "lay-

ing on of hands;" the power was actually transmitted to the disciples by the Master—the "chain of Guru-power." That, the real baptism, has been handed down for untold ages.

"Bhakti cannot be used to fulfil any desires, itself being the check to all desires." Narada gives these as the signs of love: "When all thoughts, all words and all deeds are given up unto the Lord, and the least forgetfulness of God makes one intensely miserable, then love has begun.

"This is the highest form of love because therein is no desire for reciprocity, which desire is in all human love."

"A man who has gone beyond social and Scriptural usage, he is a *Sannyasin*. When the whole soul goes to God, when we take refuge only in God, then we know that we are about to get this love."

Obey the Scriptures until you are strong enough to do without them, then go beyond them. Books are not an end-all. Verification is the only proof of religious truth. Each must verify for himself; and no teacher who says, "I have seen, but *you* cannot," is to be trusted; only that one who says, "You can see too." All Scriptures, all truths, are Vedas, in all times, in all countries: because these truths are to be *seen,* and any one may discover them.

"When the sun of love begins to break on the horizon, we want to give up all our actions unto God, and when we forget Him for a moment, it grieves us greatly."

Let nothing stand between God and your love for Him. Love Him, Love him, love Him, and let the world say what it will! Love is of three sorts—one demands, but gives nothing; the second is exchange, and the third is love without thought of return, love like that of the moths for the light.

"Love is higher than works, than *Yoga,* than knowledge."

Work is merely a schooling for the doer, it can do no

good to others. We must work out our own problem; the prophets only show us how to work. "What you think, you become," so if you throw your burden on Jesus, you will have to think of Him and thus become like Him; you *love* Him.

"Extreme love and highest knowledge are one."

But theorizing about God will not do; we must love and work. Give up the world and all worldly things, especially while the "plant" is tender. Day and night think of God and think of nothing else as far as possible. The daily necessary thoughts can be all thought through God. Eat to Him, drink to Him, sleep to Him, see Him in all. Talk of God to others; this is most beneficial.

Get the mercy of God and of His greatest children; these are the two chief ways to God. The company of these children of light is very hard to get; five minutes in their company will change a whole life, and if you really want it enough, one will come to you. The presence of those who love God makes a place holy, "such is the glory of the children of the Lord." They are He; and when they speak, their words are Scriptures. The place where they have been becomes filled with their vibrations, and those going there feel them and have a tendency to become holy also.

"To such lovers there is no distinction of caste, learning, beauty, birth, wealth, or occupation; because all are His."

Give up all evil company, especially at the beginning. Avoid worldly company, that will distract your mind. Give up all "me and mine." To him who has nothing in the universe the Lord comes. Cut the bondage of all worldly affections; go beyond laziness and all care as to what becomes of you. Never turn back to see the result of what you have done. Give all to the Lord and go on, and think not of it. The whole soul pours in a continuous current to

God; there is no time to seek money, or name, or fame, no time to think of anything but God; then will come into our hearts that infinite wonderful bliss of Love. All desires are but beads of glass. Love of God increases every moment and is ever new, to be known only by feeling it. Love is the easiest of all; it waits for no logic; it is natural. We need no demonstration, no proof. Reasoning is limiting something by our own minds. We throw a net and catch something, and then say that we have demonstrated it; but never, never can we catch God in a net.

Love should be unrelated. Even when we love wrongly, it is of the true love, of the true bliss; the power is the same, use it as we may. Its very nature is peace and bliss. The murderer, when he kisses his baby, forgets for an instant all but love. Give up all self, all egotism; get out of anger, lust; give *all* to God. "I am not, but Thou art; the old man is all gone, only Thou remainest. I am Thou." Blame none. If evil comes, know the Lord is playing with you and be exceeding glad.

Love is beyond time and space; it is absolute. . . .

Love and ask nothing; love and look for nothing further. Love and forget all the "isms." Drink the cup of love and become mad. Say, "Thine, O Thine forever, O Lord!" and plunge in, forgetting all else. The very idea of God is love. Seeing a cat loving her kittens, stand and pray. God has become manifest there; literally believe this. Repeat, "I am Thine, I am Thine," for we can see God everywhere. Do not seek for Him, just see Him.

Remember that there is but one man in the world with whom you are to have perpetual contention, and be always striving to exceed him, and that is—*yourself*.

—*Paternus*.

FROM MARY'S HEART

By F. S.

Mary. I know you are the King of kings,
the very God come low,
For so the angel spake that eve,
All wrapped in heavenly glow;
But now, asleep within my arms,
your helplessness I know.

Your helplessness, and the sweet way
you lie upon my breast,
All trustingly, like drowsy bird
held warm within the nest,
Or like a flower—would the One God
so humbly take His rest?

The Child. *Yea, humbly, trustingly as I,*
when on the great Cross laid.

Mary. No—no! You are my tiny one;
I will not be afraid!

And yet you burn the heart of me
more than the five-tongued flame
Of cherubim and seraphim
chanting His Holy Name—
Let the world keep its awful God,
mine is the mother claim!

The Child. *The world will keep its awful God*
yet, natheless, I must go.

Mary. No—no!—my son, my little son—
Stay! for I love you so!

THE LOST RADIANCE

By L. P. Jacks, D.D., LL.D., D.Litt.
Principal of Manchester College, Oxford

(From the booklet, "The Lost Radiance of the Christian Religion. Published by George H. Doran Company, New York.)

The radiance of the Christian religion is a subtle and elusive thing which no definition can capture and no eloquence describe. It is not attached to any particular mode of presenting the doctrinal side. Christianity in its simplest and most intelligible form may be as deficient in radiance as any other. No doubt the simpler forms ought to retain it more easily than the complex. But that has not always happened. All that need be said is, that a simple Christianity which has lost its radiance is no more effectual than a complex Christianity under similar conditions. The simple like the complex may easily overlook the presence of a thing so subtle. In religion, as in art, the difference between the best and the second best is a difference that cannot be verbally formulated—"it is the matter of a hair, a shade, an inward quiver"—and yet what a difference it is! We recognize it in persons though perhaps without knowing exactly what it is.

Indeed it was in the form of a person that the radiance of Christianity made its first appearance and its first impression on the world. It has a kinship with Beauty, but it stands for a Beauty so different from any other with which we are familiar that even that pregnant word does not carry us very far. And yet it is no travesty of our religion to say that its power to move us lies in the vision it brings of a hidden beauty in the world, present even in the depths of pain and sorrow—and nowhere else so poignantly present as there—the sight of which is so encouraging, so invig-

orating, so exhilarating, that life and conduct are immediately raised to its own levels, and we ourselves become dispensers of it, with a new mastery over fate and circumstance, conquerors and more than conquerors over these light afflictions that are but for a moment. . . .

"A light came *into the world*"—so the Fourth Gospel puts it—not a light shed from without, but a light that burns within the heart of the world itself, transfiguring the whole length and breadth of existence, from what it seems to be to the eye of sense into the fullness of its reality—the fitting abode of immortal and rejoicing spirits, the Father's house of many mansions, where music and dancing await the regenerated soul; not only the music to which we listen, but the dancing which reproduces the music in the total movement of our lives. This is what I mean, and nothing less than this, when I speak of the radiance of the Christian religion—not an adventitious quality, nor a mere alleviation or adornment of an otherwise stern and uncompromising code of duty, but an essential and all-pervading energy, in which duty itself becomes a new creation along with everything else, forgotten as duty because it has been transformed into love, so that the poet could say:

Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads.

There are many ways in which we may read the New Testament; many moods in which we may respond to its appeal; many angles of vision from which we may interpret its teachings. Mostly we place it in an atmosphere which is certainly not its native air, and which it can hardly breathe without some loss of its essential radiance.

How shall we describe the setting in which we most commonly place it? I am not using a veiled term of contempt when I call it the atmosphere of our Churches and Chapels.

We read it in close connection with the solemn exercises of religion and with the gravity of theological studies. We read it with the memory of endless controversies in the background of our minds. We read it as men who are anxious for the safeguarding of morality, though the Gospel of Christ is indeed no more anxious about morality than it is about the morrow. We read it as a portentous document which brings us into the presence of dread alternatives, and bids us choose between life and death. In such associations we naturally become pensive and our spirits are apt to droop; the lights grow dim; the tone subdued; the temper inelastic and sometimes perhaps a little cowed. That is not a favorable state of mind for penetrating the secret of Christ. Our minds should be undisturbed by controversial interests. There is that in the Gospel which is more akin to the song of the sky-lark and the babbling of brooks.

And yet I am far from saying that in all this pensiveness we are utterly mistaken. . . . There are moments indeed, or phases, when the whole meaning of our religion seems to turn on the dark tragedy of human existence; when Christ Himself comes before us a Man of Sorrows, and the Cross overshadows everything else. But these things are not dwelt upon in a heavy-hearted way. Christianity does not brood upon the sorrows of mankind. It is always music that you hear, and sometimes dancing as well; and if at times the melody dies out in a sad cadence, or even a cry of despair, it is never final, but only the prelude to a greater song. The mistake arises, where we pitch upon the minor key as though it were the characteristic note. . . . Whenever that happens, Christianity fails. It fails through the loss of its radiant energy. It sinks to the level of a philosophy of life piping to a world that will not dance.

It is strange, after the Christian religion has been studied

and practised for so many ages, though it has been studied far more than it has been practised, that we need to remind ourselves so often that Christianity is essentially the religion of the Spirit. It was so to Jesus; it was so to St. Paul; and it should be so to us. The final object of a spiritual religion must always be the Spirit, that and nothing else. "God," said Jesus, "is Spirit," and it is a definition of God which goes behind and beneath all the other names that are applied to Him. And not only the object of it but the source; the well-spring of all motives, as well as the goal of all desires. The fruit of the Spirit, says St. Paul, is love, joy, peace, and the rest, all the great virtues following in the train of these three. These are the fruits of the Spirit, because they are the nature of the Spirit. The Spirit is love; It is peace; It is joy; and perhaps joy most of all. It is a joyous energy, having a centre in the soul of man. It is not a foreign principle which has to be introduced into a man from without; It belongs to the substance and structure of his nature; It needs only to be liberated there; and when once that is done, It takes possession of all the forces of his being, repressing nothing, but transfiguring everything till all his motives and desires are akindled and aglow with the fires and energy of that central flame with its love, its peace, its joy.

We are introduced to a conception of man which represents him as a vast reservoir of spiritual force, unused, undeveloped, perhaps even unborn, but waiting for liberation, and destined when liberated to clothe him with splendid virtues, to expand his being over an enormous range, to make his garments whiter than any fuller on earth can white them, and his countenance to shine as the sun.

Over against this conception of man, the Religion of the Spirit furnishes a conception of the world, of the universe,

of reality, to correspond. As man in his innermost nature is a far higher being than he seems, so the world in its innermost nature is a far nobler fabric than it seems, precisely the kind of place, or of home, where the liberated spirit can find a never ending field for its activities, and a never ending theme for its joy. Man and his world are transfigured together; how could it be otherwise, seeing that both are of one substance? It is not man alone, but the whole creation, groaning and travailing in pain together until now, that stands to be delivered by the Spirit, delivered from the vision that is incomplete into the vision that is complete, delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Such is the compass and depth of the Christian religion—the Religion of the Spirit. Such are the qualities which make it preëminently a religion of encouragement, and throw it into sharp contrast with that other type of religion, which . . . has often usurped its place—the religion whose keynote is *domination,* whose method is repression, whose atmosphere is gloom and whose end is failure.

REPORT

CALIFORNIA

All the Services and Classes at the Ananda-Ashrama in La Crescenta and the Vedanta Centre, 745 West Adams St., Los Angeles, have been faithfully carried on by Sister Daya during Swami Paramananda's long absence. The Swami is now back in California and will take all the Services.

Among the Autumn guests at the Ananda-Ashrama were Dr. and Mrs. William Norman Guthrie. Dr. Guthrie, whose work in connection with St. Marks-in-the-Bouwerie,

New York, has focused the attention of the artistic, religious and cultural world, came to California in completion of a recreational journey to the west. They deeply regretted finding Swami Paramananda absent from his Peace Retreat, but enjoyed the atmosphere that his vision has helped to create, and proved themselves deeply interested in all of the Ashrama activities. Dr. Guthrie was especially fascinated with the bee culture, details of which he eagerly discussed with Sister Seva, the keeper of the bees.

BOSTON

The evening of November 6th was an exceptional Thursday evening. Mr. C. F. Andrews and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Gregg were the honored guests and Miss Katharine F. Sherwood, one of the oldest members of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, who has just returned from India, was the speaker. Swami Paramananda presided and on rising, he reminded the audience that he could not possibly let such a rare opportunity go by without offering hearty and warm welcome to the distinguished guests. He then requested Mr. C. F. Andrews to give a few words. Mr. Andrews in his characteristic simple way related some intimate recent experience with the great poet, Rr. Rabindranath Tagore, thus revealing his spirit of utter humility and service. Mr. Gregg also responded to Swami's request and spoke in gracious manner, touching upon some of the vital and spiritual ideals of India. The rest of the evening was devoted to the talk of the principal speaker, Miss Sherwood, which was indeed most heartily appreciated by the entire audience. She gave in most direct and charming way her experiences in India, beginning from her landing at Singapore in Malay States. She especially touched upon the extraordinary hospitality of the people. She went on drawing a picture of her personal contact with various parts of India, the life at the

hotels, visits with learned Hindus, an occasional tea with some of the native princes, and other fascinating tales of her experiences. The whole audience was under the great spell of intimate contact with that far-away country so often portrayed by people with mystifying color. Most hearty and true was the enthusiasm of the audience and they all felt they had had a glimpse of India because one of them had brought so close before them the actual picture of India.

Swami Paramananda, at the conclusion, told them that in order to get the greatest amount of benefit out of Miss Sherwood's personal contact with India they should have her speak not everything on one occasion but in piecemeal so that she might convey to them in more comprehensive way such a vast subject. Futhermore, he remarked, as he listened to her, how packed with richness of experience was her tour through Mother India.

Another important event of the month of November was when on the afternoon of the 8th, the new building of the Ananda-Ashrama in Cohasset was consecrated by its founder, Swami Paramananda. The people gathered by the fireplace of this unusual room which was decorated by the loving hands of the gifted members of the work, all invariably exclaimed, "How beautiful! How charming! How artistic!" Right over the mantel stands with beautiful and delicate design, the great reminder, "THEE I LOVE IN ALL." In most simple manner, Swami Paramananda consecrated the place with services and prayers. Then the refreshment was served to all the guests. Most happy and spontaneous atmosphere of fellowship was experienced as the guests gathered by the fireplace and finally at the twilight hour they roamed through the thickly wooded pine grove just before their departure for the city. "What a peace! What a sense of beautiful sanctity! What an atmos-

phere!" These exclamations were on every lip. All the workers felt with deep gratitude in their hearts that indeed the place was blessed.

VEDANTA CENTRE OF BOSTON

All the activities at the Vedanta Centre will be faithfully carried on by Srimati Gayatri Devi of India during Swami Paramananda's absence from the east. At the Thursday Evening Dinner, Gayatri Devi will give special talks on India's traditions and legends which will have ample educational value.

NEW BOOK

Something quite unique and most helpful for everyone regardless of their caste, creed or vocation. Swami Paramananda's new book, "Right Resolutions," just out. Beautifully bound in flexible cover and of such convenient size that anyone can carry it in a vest pocket or in a purse. The price is only fifty cents, and it makes an excellent gift book at this time.

IMPORTANT

With this issue, the MESSAGE OF THE EAST completes its 19th year and all the subscribers are kindly requested to send in their renewals as early as possible. A year's subscription to the MESSAGE OF THE EAST will prove a thoughtful and valuable gift during the season. Yearly subscription only two dollars.

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